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HK Express explains actions. **PAGE 3**

3 SMA pilots now able to fly to Guam. **PAGE 3**

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'Public charge' rule excludes NAP

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

The Nutrition Assistance Program under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs will not be affected, in the way it operates, by the "public charge" rule, which allows the Department of Homeland Security to deny legal status to immigrants if they are benefiting from certain public benefits.

See PUBLIC on Page 4



Macaranas

USCIS: Alien parent not a 'public charge' if US citizen child applied as beneficiary

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE
fergie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

When a U.S. citizen child applied and received Medicaid or food stamp as a beneficiary,

his or her alien parent is not considered a "public charge," according to Matthew Bourke

of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Media Affairs Division yesterday.

"If they were considered a 'public charge,' then it would not be because of public benefits received by the

See USCIS on Page 4

Seabees eye April start for two Tinian projects

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE
fergie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Two projects on Tinian are expected to kick into high gear this April, spearheaded by Navy Seabees as part of their Innovative Readiness Training. Commonwealth Ports Authority



King-Hinds

board chair Kimberlyn King-Hinds disclosed at a regular board meeting at the Port of Saipan conference room last Tuesday that CPA expects to

See SEABEES on Page 4

ASH WEDNESDAY

Fr. Isidro T. Ogunmoro of Mount Carmel Parish inscribes ashes in the form of a cross on the forehead of an altar server at the Saint Jude Parish church in Koblerville yesterday as part of the observance of Ash Wednesday, which kicks off the Catholic Church's Lenten Season.

JUSTINE NAUTA



INSIDE



BUSINESS

Factories that make the world's smart-phones, toys and other goods are struggling to reopen.

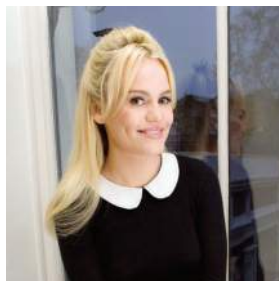
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ASIA

The number of new virus infections in South Korea jumps again.

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LIFE & STYLE

Duffy says she's been out of the public eye to focus on recovering from being raped.

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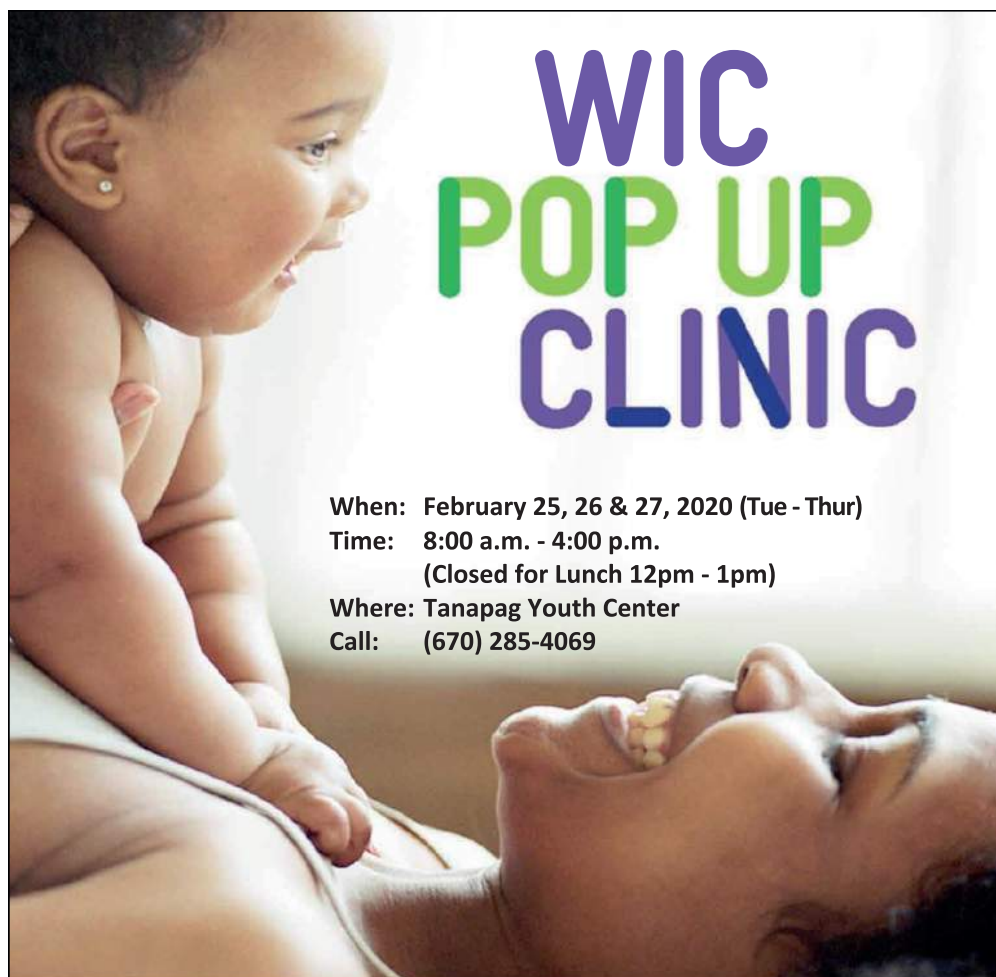


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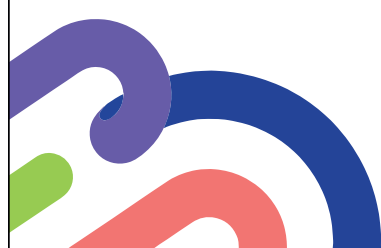
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"This institution is an equal opportunity provider. This project was supported by Grant 7NM700NM5 CFDA 10.557 from USDA and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC). The contents above are solely the responsibility of CHCC and do not necessarily represent the official views of USDA."

Local

Kilili: No child should go hungry

By IVA MAURIN
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 REPORTER

Millions of children in the United States rely heavily on school lunches for food. However, children in Micronesia are excluded from the National School Lunch Program, a federally-assisted program that provides nutritionally-balanced low-, or no-cost lunches to school children every day.

To remedy this situation, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) has introduced the FAS School Meals Improvement Act to make it more inclusive to children in Micronesia.

"There are children in Micronesia who can only go to school half-day, because there

is no lunch program for them," Sablan said. "On Friday, I introduced the FAS School Meals Improvement Act, so children in the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau can take part in federal school meal programs and have a better chance to grow up healthy and well-educated."

A *Business Insider* article reported that over 12 million children in the U.S. live in food-insecure homes, and that 22 million children rely on free or reduced price lunches at school.

Sablan's bill seeks to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to grant eligibility to the Federated States of Micronesia, Re-

public of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau for certain programs.

Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-Hawaii) and Delegate Aumua Amata Coleman Radewagen (R-American Samoa) are co-sponsors of Sablan's bill.

Originally, the Freely Associated States were included in federal school meals programs, but were cut out by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act in 1996.

"Restoring eligibility for school meals will improve educational outcomes, save on future costs from nutrition-related disorders, and help cement U.S. alliances in our region," said Sablan.

Criminal mischief at CGC on Navy Hill

On Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020, at about 10:50am, the CNMI Department of Public Safety received a 911 call reporting a criminal mischief incident at the Community Guidance Center on Navy Hill. DPS dispatched police to the scene.

At the scene, police met with the caller who stated that two air-conditioning units have been damaged. The caller add-

ed that both units were brand new and have been purchased about a month ago. The caller mentioned that the staff noticed the air-conditioning units were not blowing cool air, so they decided to call an air conditioning technician. When the technicians did a quick inspection of the unit they noticed that two outdoor units were damaged. The first unit had two holes on

the side of its condenser as the second unit had dents, which looked to have been caused by force. The staff then called for police assistance.

If you or someone you know have any information about this crime, we encourage you to call 911. If you would like to remain anonymous call the CNMI Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. (PR)



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HK Express explains actions in case of stranded passengers

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

To ensure that no Hong Kong Express passenger would be left stranded in the CNMI, the airline reportedly reached out to their business partners, travel agencies, and ground handling agent soon after canceling flights to the CNMI.

In a letter to Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Christopher S. Tenorio dated Feb. 20, Hong Kong Express Airways Ltd. chief executive officer Mandy Ng said that he was told that no HKE passenger has communicated to them about being stranded.

He also discussed in his letter the series of actions they immediately took upon their decision to suspend services.

Tenorio wrote to HKE last Feb. 18 concerning stranded Chinese travelers in the CNMI. Last Feb. 13, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres also wrote HKE to express his "grave concern" over the plight of 130 travelers who were left stranded in the CNMI after HKE suspended flights to and from the CNMI last Feb. 6 due to the novel coronavirus outbreak in China.

Last Monday, press secretary Kevin Bautista said the CNMI government continues its efforts to have the remaining 40% of the original 130 stranded passengers repatriated, with



FERDIE DE LA TORRE

Commonwealth Ports Authority executive director Christopher S. Tenorio, third from left, gives a report during CPA board's regular meeting Tuesday at the CPA conference room at the Port of Saipan.

the help of the Chinese Consulate in Los Angeles.

Ng explained that following Torres' issuance of an executive order last Jan. 29 declaring a state of significant emergency due to the virus, they received a letter from CPA the following day requesting HKE's assistance in suspending the arrival of travelers transiting directly or indirectly from mainland China to the CNMI.

Ng said that, considering the large number of travelers who were still in the CNMI during Chinese New Year period, HKE closely monitored the number of passengers traveling out of the CNMI before

considering the suspension of services to and from Saipan.

The CEO said that, following the suspension of other direct air services between the CNMI and mainland China, they were aware of the possibility of passengers being left stranded in the CNMI.

Beijing Capital Airlines suspended flights on Jan. 31, while China Eastern Airlines and Sichuan Airlines did so on Feb. 1.

Ng noted that this is precisely the reason why it was not until Feb. 4 that HKE had to make the difficult decision to suspend services between Saipan and Hong Kong from Feb. 6 to March 28.

Upon suspension of their services, Ng said they immediately notified all their affected passengers via email and short messaging service, and provided them the option of either a full refund or change to any other route within the HKE network.

He said they also published a travel advisory on their official website advising passengers about the suspension of services between Saipan and Hong Kong.

Ng added that they provided

their affected passengers contact details to reach out to HKE.

He said they reached out to business partners and travel agencies they work with in Hong Kong and mainland China, reconfirming that none of their customers are stranded in the CNMI.

Ng said their ground handling agent at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, POI Aviation, has also confirmed that no HKE passenger has reached out to them as a result of being stranded.

"Our call center has neither received any calls nor emails from HKE passengers requesting for assistance as a result of being stranded in Saipan following the suspension of our services," he said.

The CEO said they have also contacted the Marianas Visitors Authority requesting assistance in communicating with CPA for contact details of any HKE passengers that may have been stranded.

Ng said they have been working closely with the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in Hong Kong since last Feb. 15, who, in turn, has been working with the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Los Angeles.

Ng said they have provided HKE with details of 35 passengers who were/are on Saipan.

He said they have reached out to all 35 passengers and have been able to contact all except four.

The CEO said prompt assistance was provided to the 31.

Ng said Chinese nationals stranded in the CNMI were advised to contact the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Los Angeles.

SMA pilots now able to fly to Guam

Star Marianas Air announced yesterday that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services has already given its Japanese pilots with documentation that will allow them to fly flights to Guam from the CNMI.

In a statement yesterday, Star Marianas Air thanked USCIS, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), and other members of the CNMI leadership for their assistance in the matter.

"We look forward to continuing to provide the highest quality of service possible to the communities we serve," the Star Marianas statement added.

Star Marianas Air president Shaun R. Christian earlier appealed to CNMI leaders, including Torres, to ask for their help in expediting the visas for the three pilots. Before the matter was resolved, the Japanese pilots have been unable to operate flights between the CNMI and Guam since Jan. 11 because USCIS had yet to grant their advance parole applications.

Without the ability to use the three pilots in flights into Guam, Star Marianas was unable to provide medi-

cal referral patient transfers and other on-demand charters between the CNMI and Guam. The three Japanese,

who have CW-1 visa status, fly Star Marianas' twin engine Piper Chieftains. *(Saipan Tribune)*

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Despite austerity, Man'amko Center isn't affected

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

The Man'amko Center of the Office of Aging under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs will

continue as is and the only difference is that the center will be closed on Fridays once austerity measures kick in.



TECHNICAL ADVICE

The Northern Marianas College-Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Services' Agriculture Production Program leader, Dr. Virendra M. Verma, second from right, recently provided technical assistance and advice on locally suitable cantaloupe farming practices to interested farmers at the NMC CREES Agricultural Research Station. For more information about NMC CREES, visit crees.marianas.edu.

NMC

PUBLIC

From Page 1

Citing the U.S. government's official website, NAP administrator WALTER MACARANAS pointed out that DHS "has added a new definition of 'receipt of public benefits' to section 212.21(e) to clarify that DHS will only consider the alien to have received a public benefit if the alien is a named beneficiary of the benefit."

As such, an alien does not receive a benefit merely by virtue of having applied or been certified for such benefit, and has not received a public benefit if the alien acted not on his or

her own behalf but on behalf of another person, Macaranas said.

"Therefore, if an alien is the person receiving benefits on behalf of another (for instance as a parent [or] legal guardian) the alien will not be considered to have received, been certified for, or applied for such public benefit," he added.

A "public charge" is a person who receives government cash assistance for income or long-term care, which includes one who receives food stamps or Medicaid, among other government-funded benefits.

According to Macaranas, the "public charge" rule does not affect nonresident parents who are not the name beneficiary of the pro-

gram and that the "public charge" rule does not change how NAP will operate and will not change their eligibility.

Macaranas also added that it is not their intention to turn people away. Whether resident or nonresident, NAP will help anyone who wants to apply for the benefit, and if they meet all the requirements and eligibility, then they will be able to obtain the food stamp benefit, he said.

The U.S. Supreme Court reversed a nationwide ban, or injunction, last Jan. 27 that had prevented the DHS from enforcing the "public charge" rule. Certain public benefits include Medicaid, nutrition assistance program, or housing assistance.

USCIS

From Page 1

U.S. citizen child," said Bourke in response to *Saipan Tribune's* request for clarification about the "public charge" rule.

A "public charge" is a person who receives government cash assistance for income or long-term care. That means one who received food stamp or Medicaid benefits.

Many alien parents of U.S. citizen children in the CNMI are confused whether they are considered a "public charge" when, in fact, it's their children who applied and benefitted from Medicaid and food stamp. These alien parents are worried that when they submit an application for a "green card" they will be denied that, being a "public charge." A "green card" refers to the Permanent Resident Card, a document issued to immigrants who have been allowed permanent residence in the United States. It is colored green, hence the name.

Bourke said this issue is addressed several times in the final "public charge" rule.

Bourke said the final rule clearly states that "the Department of Homeland Security will not attribute U.S. citizen children's receipt of public benefits to their parents who are subject to the 'public charge' inadmissibility ground."

He said USCIS only considers the alien to have received a public benefit if the alien is a named beneficiary of the benefit, but not where an alien is applying, being certified to receive, or receiving a public benefit on behalf of another person.

"USCIS does not consider any public benefit received by, requested by, or certified for a U.S. citizen or any relative or household member of the alien," Bourke said.

An example of "not considered as received, requested or certified for the alien" is when the alien parent is applying for a public benefit on behalf of a U.S. citizen child, Bourke said.

He said the following are also not considered "received, requested, or certified for the alien":

■ The alien is the legal guardian or has power of attorney of the alien's lawful permanent resident parent and is applying for a benefit on behalf of

such parent; or

■ The alien is designated by the public benefit-granting agency to receive the public benefit on behalf of the beneficiary.

Bourke said documentation provided by the benefit-granting agency may indicate that the alien is the guardian, designated representative, or that the beneficiary is the care of (c/o in an address block) the alien.

"Not all public benefit-granting agencies would require a person to be a parent or legal guardian for the alien or have power of attorney to receive the benefit and USCIS does not request such information," he said.

Bourke said USCIS officers would review documentation provided by the benefit-granting agency to determine whether the alien is the direct beneficiary of the public benefit or if he or she is receiving the benefit on behalf of another person.

USCIS announced early this week that it will implement the inadmissibility on "public charge" grounds final rule on Feb. 24, 2020, nationwide, including in Illinois, following another judiciary victory lifting the injunction in that state.

According to Walter Manglona, Office on Aging director, the center and its staff have been saving power and being more conservative even before the austerity period. Regardless of austerity, they will continue to practice energy conservation, he added.

The Office on Aging hasn't cut any of their programs and, in fact, they're operating normally but more carefully in terms of delivery services. For instance, Manglona and the Office on Aging drivers have come up with a plan on how to turn a back-and-forth trip into a one-way trip that will still be convenient for the *man'amko*.

"The main goal is to continue to deliver the services we're doing without being reckless with spending," said Manglona. He noted that that's how it has been with him and

the Office on Aging staff and it won't be much of a difference once austerity Fridays hit. Under the government's austerity plan, all government offices would be closed every Friday.

One of their upcoming events that they are looking forward to is the *Mes Man'amku* in May, which is a month that celebrates Older American Month.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, one of the events that was held in 2018 was the *Man'amko* Takeover Day, which consisted of the elderly taking over Cabinet positions like Department of Finance secretary, Department of Community Cultural Affairs secretary, and even the position of CNMI governor. This serves as a way for the CNMI elderly to get a glimpse of what it's like to run the islands these days.

BECQ to hold another beach cleanup

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality's Cleanup Brigade will be organizing its third cleanup activity this year at Obyan Beach on March 7, 2020.

Volunteers who would like to come out and help can meet at Obyan Beach from 8am to 10am. Volunteers will be given water, gloves, trash bags, and pickers while sup-

plies last.

Every month, BECQ's Cleanup Brigade would choose an area where to pick up trash every first Saturday of the month.

"Our islands are built on the tourism industry. We want our islands to be known as the clean and beautiful CNMI," said BECQ's Zabrina Shai. *(Chevy Kate Q. Alipio)*

SEABEES

From Page 1

start this April the Marpo Heights 2 road pavement and the Tinian seaport top side improvements.

The construction work will be handled by the U.S. Naval Construction Battalions, also known as the Navy Seabees, who are now on Tinian. The Tinian municipality paid for the architect and engineering services, while the Seabees are supplying the labor and material for the projects.

In a later interview, King-Hinds said negotiations for the projects were a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Defense, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, CPA, and the Tinian leadership.

King-Hinds informed the board of directors during Tuesday's meeting that the Seabees are already on the ground on Tinian, having arrived there last Feb. 15, and have started shipping in their equipment to make those improvements.

She said the two projects were part of the divert airfield negotiations and were among the outside-the-fence projects that the CPA board had negotiated with the U.S. Department of Defense. The divert airfield refers to the DOD plan to build an alternative landing airfield on Tinian in case the U.S. Anderson Base in Guam is unavailable due to wars or calamities.

King-Hinds said the road pavement at Marpo Heights 2 project has nothing to do with the airport, but the board had successfully negotiated that as part of the divert airfield lease.

"We are really excited, the community is all excited that we're [going to] see those projects start beginning April," King-Hinds said in an interview.

She said they have been talking with the Seabees about the design, the scope, and specifications of the projects. "This is like a multi-year project so we are looking at two-year completion date," she said.

At the very minimum, King-Hinds said that what the Seabees will do is make infrastructure improvements that will have a lasting impact not just for the economy but for the community, who will benefit from improving the road and improving the docks.

King-Hinds also discussed with the board at the meeting another project for the Tinian Marina Dock, which will tap into divert lease proceeds apportioned to the seaport to make improvements such as a restroom, road pavement and paved parking lots.

She said the intent basically is to draw on some of the divert funds or the divert lease proceeds to make improvements at the Tinian Marina Dock.

King-Hinds said they want to build a restroom there because there is no public facility, and have a parking lot as well as paved entry ways.

"So this area is widely used by the community," said King-Hinds, adding that the Tinian leadership has asked for help in improving the area, which is made of gravel and is dusty.

She said the proceeds that they will be drawing are from the seaport portion of the divert lease agreement.

King-Hinds said when they signed the \$21.9-million, 40-year divert lease agreement with the DOD, there were specific allocation for the Tinian seaport and those are the funds that they will be using to make those improvements.

King-Hinds said she is going to defer action on that item (Tinian Marina Dock) for follow up with the CPA board's seaport committee.

Construction work on CHCC solar power project now done

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Health Care Corp. has completed the construction of the Photovoltaic System Parking Shade Structure—its solar power project that doubles as a covered parking lot at the Commonwealth Health Center—and is still on track to getting the solar

energy connected to the CHC grid in the first quarter of 2020.

In an interview with CHCC spokesperson Zoe Travis, the construction of the structure is now complete; it's just a matter of getting the solar energy into the hospital grid, considered phase one of the project.

"Everything's done in terms of building the structures. The big thing now is connecting all

[the wires and cables] so that it's actually drawing power and putting it into the CHC. That, I believe, is still ongoing. It may have been partially implemented, but it hasn't been like finalized at this point. But the actual construction is all finished," she said.

The construction of the project was started back in October 2019 and was com-

pleted Jan. 31.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the project which was worth \$903,301, would allow the CHCC to produce 160 kilowatts of its own power from the solar panels.

The project follows CHCC's upgrades on the hospital's water system and is ultimately intended to help the hospital lower its energy cost, boost its energy efficiency, and reduce its carbon footprint.

The project was made possible after CHCC received a \$560,000 grant from the Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs Energizing Insular Communities program.

The first phase of CHCC's solar power project was partially funded by the \$560,000 grant provided by the Department of the Interior but CHCC had to cover the remaining \$342,301.

CHCC board members temporarily agreed to source the

amount from the fiscal year 2019 budget request from the Legislature to cover the \$342,301.

CHCC CEO Esther Muña said in a previous article that the project is long overdue for a healthcare facility like CHC, as it would save them money that they can use for other services.

CHCC estimates to save as much as \$700,000 a year on its utility bills once the solar project is completed.

PauPau Bbeach sign completed

By **IVA MAURIN**
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Yet another improvement project in Precinct 4 has come to a completion with the PauPau Beach project sign getting an overhaul.

Precinct 4 Rep. Joel Castro Camacho (R-Saipan) immediately got his office to work on fixing the decades-old beach sign, soon after a car rammed the beach landmark sign about two months ago.

"We wanted to do something different," Camacho said. "The old sign was re-

ally sentimental because it has been 25 years since it has been up so we wanted to memorialize the sign by enhancing it."

He said they did not want to leave the sign sitting destroyed for a long time since they have office funds to fix it. An initial problem was finding workers, particularly a mason and a helper, but Camacho's office was able to soon resolve this.

Aside from the PauPau Beach sign, more projects are in the works. "I'll be working on doing one for Tanapag Beach and then Capital Hill for the sports facility, so we

have two more we're working on, and then we're going to be upgrading [the sign] going to As Matuis. We are working little by little, but we're getting there," Camacho said.

The projects are in line with

Precinct 4's vision to enhance and rehabilitate recreational facilities in the area, for the community to enjoy, as well as to entice more tourists.

Camacho hopes that members of the community would

help keep the sign clean.

"[I] just [want to] encourage the community to appreciate it. There's a lot of hard work that goes into every project we undertake," the representative said.

Camacho also appealed for everyone's consideration and understanding in helping keep all signs and recreational areas clean, including respect for all the projects that are being built within the precinct.

NMC's aquaculture facility now rebuilt

Over a year after Super Typhoon Yutu, the Northern Marianas College Cooperative Research, Extension, and Education Service finally completed the reconstruction of its Aquaculture Program facility earlier this month.

Aquaculture Program leader Michael M. Ogo said the reconstruction cost them over \$500,000. This does not include another \$250,000 for staff salary and supplies.

He said NMC-CREES' Aquaculture Program is vital in developing the economy. "I wish that there are more [research & development]... because it would help the CNMI's economy."

Construction work on the Aquaculture Program facility started last September.

Last Jan. 1, the Aquaculture Program was also awarded a grant from U.S. Department of Agriculture in support of its fourth pale rabbit fish project.

Ogo said the aquaculture facility provides fish farmers in the Northern Marianas high-market potential for their produce. "The program could provide them the baby fish and they can grow it."

"[We] would like rabbitfish to be the next aquaculture fishery commodity to grow in the Northern Marianas to be sold by [local] fish farms," he added.

The aquaculture facility will most likely be operated a month from now as they are still waiting for equipment needed for their research project on rabbitfish. *(Chevy Kate Q. Alipio)*

Child care providers undergo training

A total of 118 registered child care providers attended the Child Care Funds and Development under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs' 10th Annual Health and Safety Training last Feb. 22.

The event was co-hosted by the CCDF Program, along with the Commonwealth Health Care Corp. Maternal and Child Health Bureau in partnership with DCCA'S Child Care Licensing Program and Evergreen Learning.

According to CCDF administrator Maribel Loste, the training is important for child-care providers since it'll help the growth that's needed for high quality child care.

Margaret Aldan, who is with the Department of Public Health Services under CHCC, gave the opening remarks.

Among the topics discussed were Compassion Fatigue, by Erlain Evangelista and Russelle Mae Marquez, both technical assistance specialists from the Evergreen Learning; a Pediatrician's Guide to Keeping our Children Healthy led by Dr. Elizabeth Triche, CHCC pediatrician; a bullying awareness presentation led by Elsie Tilipao from the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy Systems Inc.; and a presentation on baby behavior from infants to toddlers by Eric Camacho, Women, Infants, Children program administrator.

The CCDF will be hosting an Emergency Preparedness Training on Feb. 29, from 7:30am to 3pm at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. *(Justine Nauta)*

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Widow files wrongful death lawsuit over death of husband

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A Washington-based widow has filed a wrongful death lawsuit in federal court over the death of her 65-year-old husband, who was a Federal Aviation Administration employee who went missing after scuba diving with three other persons at the Grotto in 2018.

Madelyn Jones is suing Axe Murderer Tours LLC and its owner, Harry Blalock, Green Flash LLC and its owner, Joe McDoulett, Professional Association of Dive Instructors Worldwide Corp., and PADI America's Inc.

Jones, through counsel William M. Fitzgerald, is suing the defendants for negligence-wrongful death and for breach of Consumer Protection Act. She is also suing PADI Worldwide and PADI Americas for negligence and vicarious liability.

Jones asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to hold the defendants liable to pay her over \$75,000 in damages, plus attorney's fees and court costs.

McDoulett, who is a lawyer and a former Federal Bureau of Investigation special agent, refused to comment about the lawsuit yesterday.

Blalock also has no comment.

According to Fitzgerald in the complaint, FAA sent John Jones to Saipan to help re-establish the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, which was damaged by Super Typhoon Yutu in

October 2018.

On Nov. 18, 2018, during John Jones' day off, he went scuba diving with a fellow employee, Dana Couto. Being unfamiliar with the waters around Saipan, John Jones and Couto sought a professional scuba diving guide and were informed that Blalock was a professional dive instructor, certified by PADI, the largest scuba diving agency in the world, Fitzgerald said.

The lawyer said John Jones and Couto contacted Blalock and his dive tour company, Axe Murderer, on Nov. 17, 2018, to take them diving the following day.

On the morning of Nov. 18, 2018, Blalock met John Jones and Couto at their hotel and drove them to the Green Flash shop to pick up oxygen tanks for the dive. It was at that point that McDoulett, who worked at Green Flash and was a dive instructor there, joined the group, Fitzgerald said.

At 9am, the four divers entered the water at the Grotto, submerged and swam together through one of the underwater passages to outside the Grotto.

Fitzgerald said that, after approximately 27 minutes into the dive, and when John Jones and McDoulett were outside the Grotto in the Pacific Ocean, John Jones signaled to McDoulett that he was running low on air. At that time, John Jones was about 30 feet below the surface of the ocean, Fitzgerald said.

The lawyer said McDou-

lett turned away from John Jones and swam to Blalock, who was just inside the Grotto at that time. McDoulett allegedly used hand signals to inform Blalock and Couto that John Jones was low on air.

Fitzgerald said Blalock used hand signals to point toward the Grotto entrance and continued to swim through the Grotto without checking on John Jones.

Fitzgerald said McDoulett also began swimming toward the Grotto entrance without confirming that John Jones was following him.

The lawyer said that after swimming a little bit, McDoulett turned back to look for John Jones, but did not see the latter following him. Instead of checking on John Jones, McDoulett swam to Blalock and gestured that John Jones was missing, Fitzgerald said.

Blalock allegedly gestured to McDoulett that he should turn back and search for John Jones.

Fitzgerald said McDoulett swam in the other direction toward the ocean to search for John Jones.

After Blalock had surfaced with Couto within the Grotto, Blalock swam back through the passage to search for John Jones.

Blalock and McDoulett did not find him.

The U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and the Department of Public Safety searched for John Jones for several days. The search was suspended on Nov. 24, 2018.

John Jones was never found. The Superior Court issued a presumptive death certificate on March 22, 2019, with a date of death of

Nov. 18, 2018.

It was Madelyn Jones who filed a petition asking the court to declare John Jones dead.

According to the petition, the 65-year-old John Jones left behind a wife of 46 years, two children, five grandchildren, and his mother.

OVA to expand veteran's cemetery



This artist's perspective shows the planned gate for the Veterans Cemetery in Marpi.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The CNMI Office of Veterans Affairs, in collaboration with National Cemetery Administration, broke ground last Tuesday on a planned expansion of the Veteran's Cemetery in Marpi.

According to press secretary Kevin Bautista, the construction will include three columbarium structures and 240 double-depth crypts. A new gate would also be installed.

The expansion includes the construction of a new administrative building to assist visitors and families to make funeral arrangements, a maintenance building, and on-site restrooms. Also, light fixtures with solar photovoltaic and a committal shelter for when it gets too hot or when it rains are also part of the project.

Gov. Ralph DLG, Torres, the CNMI Office of Grants Management, and the CNMI Office of Veterans Affairs initiated the project in 2017. It was said that the process took them three years to accomplish because they didn't want to cut corners and had to make sure that they did



Gov. Ralph DLG Torres speaks at the groundbreaking ceremony last Tuesday on the planned expansion of the Veteran's Cemetery in Marpi.

JUSTINE NAUTA

everything correctly and according to plan.

OVA executive officer Stanley Iakopo believes that the historic property will provide a final resting place and also a tribute to CNMI veterans.

"We all die two deaths. The first time when breath leaves us for the last time; but we only truly die sometime in the future when no one speaks our name or tells our story," he said.

RNV Construction, which was awarded the contract for the project, will begin construction on Feb. 19, 2020; it is set to completed on Dec. 18, 2020. *(Krizel Tuazon)*

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP NO.: RFP20-OGM-059**

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 18, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

**"STANDALONE PHOTOVOLTIC LIGHT SYSTEM
FOR THE COCONUT RHINO (CRB) PROGRAM FOR
ROTA FOR THE OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT
& STATE CLEARING HOUSE"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

A **MANDATORY PROJECT SITE VISIT & PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING** IS SCHEDULED ON **10:00 A.M., LOCAL TIME, MARCH 03, 2020** AT THE ROTA-DLNR CONFERENCE ROOM (ON ROTA).

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO **MR. EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR., ADMINISTRATOR** VIA E-MAIL TO epi.cabrera@gov.mp **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS 04:30 P.M., MARCH 05, 2020.**

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR.
ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

SAIPAN HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
Office of the Mayor
Municipality of Saipan

**NOTICE OF REGULAR SHEFA
BOARD MEETING**

In accordance with 1 CMC § 9901 *et seq.*, as amended, the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance February 27, 2020 at 9:30 am at the SHEFA Office Conference Room, 2nd Floor, CTC Building, Oleai, Beach Road, Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. Preliminary Matters**
 1. Roll Call
 2. Adoption of Agenda
 3. Adoption of Minutes from January 30, 2019
- II. Public Comment**
- III. Reports**
 1. Administrator
 2. Chair
 3. Committee
 - a. Committee on Awards
 - b. Committee on Appeal/Deferments/Forbearance
 - c. Committee on Policy and Procedures
 - d. Committee on Program and Development
 - e. Committee of Fiscal, Legislative and Community Affairs
- IV. Old Business**
 1. 2019 SHEFA Annual Report
- V. New Business**
 1. 2021 Budget Proposal
 2. Spring 2020 Application Status
- VI. Executive Session**
- VII. Misc.**
- VIII. Next Meeting**
- IX. Adjournment**

Note: Meeting may continue the following day should the need arise.

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

**INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-CDA-060**

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 16, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) CLASS "I" SPORTS UTILITY VEHICLE (SUV) FOR THE COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

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/S/ MANUEL A. SABLON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CDA

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

Update on coronavirus outbreak's economic impact

The CNMI Department of Labor is inviting all businesses to attend a workshop on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, from 8:30am to 3:30pm, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe, with a focus on the coronavirus outbreak, with special attention to its impacts on health, tourism, and workforce.

Topics of discussion will include local labor regulations, CW-1 regulations, workforce trends, and the WIOA Ap-

prenticeship State Expansion grant, among others.

The workshop will also feature two guest speakers: Esther Muña, chief executive officer of the Commonwealth Health Care Corp., who will discuss COVID-19 countermeasures in the workplace; and Gloria Cavanagh, chairperson of the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, who will speak on the economic impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry.

Information about this important event can be found

at <http://www.marianaslabor.net/> or by calling the Labor

Department at 664-3190/3196.

This workshop is free and open to all businesses; seating is limited, so RSVP by calling

664-3196 or by emailing Mary Labadan at mlagultodol@gmail.com by March 3, 2020. **(PR)**

NEWS BRIEFS

Lane closure for Triple J Color Run

Triple J announced yesterday that the southbound lane along Beach Road will be closed on Saturday, March 7, from 4am to 8am for the Triple J 5K Saipan Bubble Color Run. The closure is necessary for the runners' safety. The start point of the lane closure is Garapan Farmer's Market proceeding south 2.5 kilometers past the Quartermaster intersection to the Blue Beach House Hotel. **(PR)**

'Walk for Parents' on Feb. 29

The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs' Division of Youth Services is inviting the public to a "Walk for Parents" event this Saturday, Feb. 29. Registration for the walk is free and will begin at 6am at the Oleai Beach Pavilion. The route will be from the Oleai Beach Pavilion to Quartermaster Road and back.

Walk for Parents is a morning walk to recognize and show appreciation for all parents in the CNMI and is the closing event for the CNMI's Parent Leadership Month.

For more information, call the DCCA-DYS Parent Education Program at 237-1015/1017. **(PR)**

SHEFA supporting documents deadline

The deadline to submit all supporting documents for those applying for the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance is Feb. 28, 2020, a Friday. Office hours is from

7:30am to 4:30pm. If you have any questions, contact the SHEFA office at 233-5995, 235-1020/21. **(PR)**

Water service interruption tomorrow

There will be a scheduled water service interruption for the areas of Chalan Pale Arnold Road (Middle Road) from 99 Cents Store to the Garapan Road traffic light tomorrow, Feb. 28, 2020, from 8:30am to 4:30pm. Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in the affected areas should expect restoration of water services soon after.

The purpose of the scheduled water service interruption is to allow CUC's water operations personnel to continue repairs on a damaged 6-inch hydrant waterline located near the Tun Kiku Building in Garapan.

For the safety of our men and women working at the site, motorists are advised to proceed with caution when driving through the area.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). **(PR)**

NMHC offers loan deferment assistance

Due to the impending austerity measures and the anticipated economic hardships as a result of the decline in the tourism industry as affected by the suspension of visitor ar-

rivals from China and reduced flights from Korea, most, if not all Northern Marianas Housing Corp. clients will somehow be affected.

Therefore, NMHC will place a blanket deferment assistance of all of its loans for a period of three months, which will begin March 1, 2020, and will end on May 31, 2020. Interest shall not accrue during the three-month period. Beginning June 1, 2020, all loans will be reinstated to their regular monthly payments and an additional three months will be added on to the loan maturity.

If you do not wish to avail of this assistance, you must provide NMHC an official cancellation notice of the deferment assistance being offered.

Should you have any further questions, contact the Mortgage & Credit Division at telephone numbers 234-6866/9447/7689/7670. **(PR)**

Ask USCIS: Implementation of public charge inadmissibility final rule

Do you have questions about the implementation of the inadmissibility on public charge grounds final rule? We want to hear from you.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will implement the final rule beginning with applications and petitions postmarked (or, if applicable, submitted electronically) on or after Feb. 24, 2020. USCIS updated the policy manual and posted information to USCIS.gov.

If you have general questions or need more clarification on how USCIS will implement the final rule, submit questions by emailing public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov by **Feb. 28 at noon Eastern**. Put "Public Charge" in the subject line. USCIS will not address case-specific questions.

Responses to frequently asked questions will be posted to the USCIS Electronic Reading Room. **(PR)**

SHRM membership meeting today

The Society for Human Resource Management- NMI Chapter will have a general membership meeting today, Feb. 27, 2020, at the Hyatt Regency Saipan ballroom beginning at 11:30am.

At the meeting, representatives of the Northern Marianas Business Alliance and SHRM NMI will provide information about the federal issues concerning the NMI's labor and immigration updates. The presenters will also discuss other provisions and requirements of the NMI U.S. Workforce Act of 2018, U.S. Public Law 115-218 such as the three-fourths guarantee.

This meeting is open to the public. The meeting includes a lunch buffet at the cost of \$25 for SHRM members and \$35 for non-members. Seats are limited, so reserve your seat by contacting Roman Tudela by email at roman.tudela@gmail.com or Denise Montenegro at denise.montenegro@hyatt.com or by telephone at (670) 323-5867/68. **(PR)**

Public hearing tomorrow on planned ban on Styrofoam, single-use plastics

Members of the community who have an opinion on the single-use plastic ban and the proposed 2022 Styrofoam ban are invited to voice their concerns at the public hearing tomorrow, Feb. 27, Thursday, at the House of Representatives chamber on Capital Hill.

Authored by Sen. Vinie Sablan (Ind-Saipan), the Plastic Bag Bill, Senate Bill 21-37, seeks to prohibit the importation and production of single-use plastic bags in the CNMI four months after its enactment.

Several island communities have already banned or implemented restrictions on the use of single-use plastics, including Hawaii, Guam, Palau, and the Marshall Islands.

Another bill, the Styrofoam Ban Bill, House Bill 21-89, which was introduced by Rep. Ivan A. Blanco (R-Saipan), intends to prohibit the use of certain disposable food service containers made of expanded polystyrene, more commonly known as Styrofoam, beginning Jan. 1, 2022.

EPS has been considered by

the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the International Agency for Research on Cancer as a "possible human carcinogen," meaning it is a possible cause of cancer among humans.

The Styrofoam ban bill aims to protect the public from this possible effect of EPS. Included in the bill are service ware for to-go food, packaged meat, bakery products, and leftovers from partially consumed meal prepared by food vendors. Polystyrene foam coolers or ice chests used for the processing or shipping of seafood are not part of the proposed ban.

Food service and catering companies, including businesses who sell or use single-use plastic bags, have been asked to provide written testimonies prior to the public hearing.

The timeframe for both bills is set to allow affected establishments to adjust and exhaust their existing inventory, and then seek alternatives that are safer for the environment. **(Iva Maurin)**

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Judiciary
Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165, Saipan MP 96950
Telephone (670) 236-9770 • Facsimile (670) 236-9797

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS RFP20-JUDICIARY-03

SUBMISSION DATE: February 28, 2020
TIME: 3:00 P.M.

"THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS JUDICIARY ADULT DRUG COURT TREATMENT SERVICES"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED BY VISITING THE CASHIER WINDOW, WINDOW #1, LOCATED AT THE FRONT GUMA' HUSTISIA / IIMWAL AWEWE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE, SUSUPE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

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/s/ ROBERTO C. NARAJA
PRESIDING JUDGE

/s/ JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER



GREEN SEA TURTLE (TOP PHOTO); HAWKSBILL SEA TURTLE (BOTTOM)

THE CNMI IS HOME TO THE ENDANGERED GREEN AND HAWKSBILL SEA TURTLE!

Sea turtles are a fundamental link in marine ecosystems. They help maintain the health of seagrass beds and coral reefs that benefit valuable species such as reef fish and other marine life that humans depend on for food. In the Marianas, sea turtles have also held a major cultural significance and tourism value.

Help protect sea turtles in the CNMI, call the Sea Turtle Stranding Hotline! Anonymous reports welcomed on injured, trapped, or dead turtles, turtle tracks or nests, illegal jewelry or meat, information concerning a poached turtle, and suspicious poaching activities.



**LIKE US ON FACEBOOK: CNMI
SEA TURTLE PROGRAM**



**DLNR-CNMI SEA TURTLE
STRANDING HOTLINE**

670-287-8537

'A time for good food, good friends, good time'

The 16th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 15-16, 2020, in the Marianas served up all the usual food, fun, and festivities, seasoned with the island's trademark hospitality and warmth.

Ferry rides from Saipan to Tinian were sold out weeks before the event, with bikers taking the first ride over on Feb. 14 for the 65K Pika Bike Race early Saturday morning. Father and daughter duo Bob (1:43:44) and J.C. Ferrer (1:55:20) both earned gold in the Open Category for Men and Women, respectively.

In her opening remarks on Saturday evening, Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo

noted the importance of the event for both visitors and residents, alike.

"It is homegrown events like Pika Fest that leave a lasting memory in the minds of visitors—the people, the culture, the beautiful scenery, the food!" said Iakopo. "Here at the Tinian Hot Pepper Festival, visitors have the opportunity to experience some of the best the Marianas has to offer. Because here, we see the strength of a community that comes together, supports each other, and rises above every challenge. A big thank you to all our volunteers that have made the festival possible, and thank you, Tinian, for showing us that in every situation, there

is room and there is time for good food, good friends, and good times."

On Feb. 16, Saipan resident Vladislav Melnik repeated his 2019 winning performance to top the Male Hot Pepper Eating Contest. The JC Pikalicious Burger Eating Contest tested 10 competitors with giant, "donne sali"-laced patties. Thomas Erickson of Tinian devoured the competition to place first, followed by Melnik and David Butterfield of Saipan. David Evangelista of Tinian served up the tastiest dish in the Estafao Pika (spicy chicken stew) Cooking Contest.

The first-ever homemade boat race was also held with mixed success, featuring boats

made on Tinian by local businesses, government offices, and families. The canoe of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources finished the quarter mile course in the turquoise lagoon the quickest in their vessel made of roofing tin and lumber. They were followed by the Division of Fish and Wildlife. Not so successful were three teams from the Tinian Mayor's Office and the MVA, which floundered due to high waves and had to be towed back to shore by the Department of Public Safety's Boating Safety unit.

The "Umang" (hermit crab) Race for boys and girls was topped by Lance Aldan of Tinian, having the fastest slow

crab. He was followed by John Del Almonte of Tinian in second place and Marcial Patio of Tinian in third. Team "Tasa" led by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres collapsed their competition in the tug of war, beating Team "Haligi" led by Tinian Mayor Edwin Aldan.

Along with other performance over the weekend, local recording artist Marvin Deleon Guerrero helped wind up the weekend with a Cha Cha Dance Competition topped by Bernie Palacios and Leonora Aldan of Tinian. Tinian's local band Pacific Cool closed the festival on Sunday night.

The Tinian Hot Pepper Festival was held at the Fiesta Grounds in San Jose village

and is organized every President's Day weekend in February by the MVA and Tinian Mayor's Office. This year's major sponsor was IT&E, and additional sponsors were Saipan World Resort, Saipan Shipping Co., and JC Café. Airport shuttle was provided by the MVA to and from the festival site and extra flights were operated between Saipan and Tinian by Star Marianas.

Accommodations are available on Tinian at Tinian Ocean View, Lorilyn's Hotel, Tinian Street Motel, Fleming Hotel, Green Lion House Hotel, and the Marpo Valley Inn. Free camping was available at Kammer Beach, Taga Beach, and at the adjacent Tachogna Beach. (PR)



MVA
Bob Ferrer, Mark Isip, and Joel Buco placed first to third, respectively, in their division of the 65K Pika Bike Race on Feb. 15, 2020, at the Tinian Hot Pepper Festival. From left are House Tourism Committee chair Rep. Joseph Lee "Pan" Guerrero, Tinian Mayor Edwin Aldan, Isip, Ferrer, Buco, Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo, and 2019 Miss Earth Fire Katherine Johnson.



MVA
The JC Café Pika Burger Eating Contest on Feb. 16, 2020, at the 16th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival was topped by hometown contender David Evangelista.



MVA
Taotao Taga Cultural Dancers perform at the 16th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Feb. 15, 2020.



MVA
Matthew C. Masga of Tinian shares his spondylus jewelry with a visitor from Guam on Feb. 15, 2020, at the Tinian Hot Pepper Festival.



MVA
Contestants brave the Women's Hot Pepper Eating Contest on Feb. 15, 2020, at the Tinian Hot Pepper Festival. Kimberly King-Hinds of Tinian topped the competition.



MVA
The tug-of-war attracted young and old contenders at the 16th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival last Feb. 15-16, 2020.



MVA
Island youth help at a vendor booth selling "donne sali" hot pepper and treats on Feb. 15, 2020, at the Tinian Hot Pepper Festival.



MVA
The diminutive but famously fiery "donne sali" hot pepper was the highlight of the 16th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival last Feb. 15-16.



MVA
Residents arrive early on Feb. 15, 2020, for the start of the Tinian Hot Pepper Festival.



MVA
The Tubera siblings sing the national anthem at the opening ceremony for the 16th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival. Also pictured from left are Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo, MVA director Warren Villagomez, and 2019 Miss Earth Fire Katherine Johnson.



MVA
Ana McMahon, center, of the Commonwealth Council for Arts & Culture, helps artists set up on Feb. 15, 2020, at the Tinian Hot Pepper Festivals.

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Public School System's longest-serving special education staff passed away at the age of 62, after 31 years of

Social Security removes language rule in its disability requirement

Social Security commissioner Andrew Saul announced a new final rule yesterday, modernizing an agency disability rule that was introduced in 1978 and has remained unchanged.

The new regulation, "Removing the Inability to Communicate in English as an Education Category," updates a disability rule that was more than 40 years old and did not reflect work in the modern economy. This final rule has been in the works for a number of years and updates an antiquated policy that makes the inability to communicate in English a factor in awarding disability benefits.

"It is important that we have an up-to-date disability program," Saul said. "The workforce and work opportunities have changed and outdated regulations need to be revised to reflect today's world."

A successful disability system must evolve and support the right decision as early in the process as possible. So-

serving the CNMI's special needs students.

Suzanne W. Lizama, who fought a long battle with cancer, died last Sunday evening after her liver gave out from the amount of medication she

cial Security's disability rules must continue to reflect current medicine and the evolution of work.

Social Security is required to consider education to determine if someone's medical condition prevents work, but research shows the inability to communicate in English is no longer a good measure of educational attainment or the ability to engage in work. This rule is another important step in the agency's efforts to modernize its disability programs.

In 2015, Social Security's Inspector General recommended that the agency evaluate the appropriateness of this policy. Social Security owes it to the American public to ensure that its disability programs continue to reflect the realities of the modern workplace. This rule also supports the Administration's longstanding focus of recognizing that individuals with disabilities can remain in the workforce.

The rule will be effective on April 27, 2020. (PR)

Suzanne W. Lizama, 62

was taking.

According to Robin Palacios, Lizama's daughter and PSS Early Intervention Program director, her mother was a "warrior who fought hard for her staff and students."

Lizama was an advocate for teacher aides to be included in the federally funded retention incentive pro-

gram for educators.

Palacios said that PSS lost a great, kind-hearted person who had a strong passion to serve the community. Palacios credits her mother for her interest in getting a degree in education.

Lizama joined PSS in 1989 as a special education or SPED teacher. In the 1990s, she became director of special

education, a position she held until she passed away.

Lizama is survived by her husband, Vicente, and two children, Palacios and Katherine Eusebio.

Lizama migrated to Saipan in 1959 when she was only a year old because her father worked for the Central Intelligence Agency, which main-

tained a field training station on the island until 1961.

Lizama attended Mount Carmel School and received her associate degree from Northern Marianas College. She obtained her bachelor's degree from the University of Guam.

Lizama's funeral service will be held on Saturday at San Antonio Church.

The service will serve as a rosary, a public viewing, and a Mass.



EDSA ANNIVERSARY

Dr. Celia Lamkin, global chair and founder of the National Youth Movement for the West Philippine Sea, leads a group of people at the San Jose intersection last Wednesday in commemorating the 34th anniversary of the People Power Revolution in the Philippines that toppled the Marcos dictatorship in February 1986. The group used the occasion to denounce the Philippine government's recent efforts to shut down that country's media company, ABS-CBN.

KRIZEL TUAZON



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-19-028, REV.1

REPLACEMENT OF SADOG TASI WWTP CLARIFIER

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Replacement of Sadog Tasi Clarifier Replacement in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The intent of the contract is for the Contractor to provide all labor, equipment, supplies and materials necessary to complete the scope of work which consists of installation of a new circular clarifier mechanism and replacement or repair of the effluent launder box; removal of the old circular clarifier mechanism and sections of the effluent launder box; replacement of the RFP weirs and scum baffle; installation of a new outer scum baffle; installation of new area lighting, wires, and conduit, and disconnect boxes; installation of a new process water spray system for foam control. The work shall include the dewatering and cleaning of aeration basin #3 and the clarifier; routing process flow and maintaining conditions during the construction period; and returning process flow from the aeration basin to the clarifier. The work shall be completed with minimal disruption to the daily operation of the Sadog Tasi Waste Water Treatment Plant. CUC requires the Project to be completed in 365 calendar days from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **March 12, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-19-028, Rev.1 Replacement of the Sadog Tasi Clarifier" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) April 2, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract. All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 16, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie Sablan, CUC P&S, Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN, JR.
Purchasing Administrator



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-20-014

LEASE OF OFFICE AND OPERATIONS SUPPORT FACILITY FOR CUC ROTA ADMINISTRATION & OPERATION

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the lease of a suitable office and operations support facility for the Headquarters of CUC's Administration and Operations on the island of Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposed office space must comply with American Disabilities Act (ADA), DPW, OSHA and CNMI Zoning regulation.

The IFB package may be obtained at the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration with CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The IFB package will be emailed to the registered Proponents email ID. Prospective Proposers for this IFB must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division to be considered. For registration inquiries, please email Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-20-014, Lease of Office and Operations support facility for CUC Rota Administration and Operation." to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on March 23, 2020** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 7, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to William Gilmore, CUC Deputy Director via email address william.gilmore@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC P&S, Purchasing Technician, Senior christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

The #MeToo movement let victims be heard. Weinstein verdict tells victims they can be believed

At last, the disgraced film producer Harvey Weinstein has been held legally accountable for his reprehensible sexual misconduct and the trauma it caused to far too many women working in the entertainment industry. After a trial that included weeks of testimony from multiple women who said that the producer had assaulted them, a New York jury found Weinstein guilty of raping one woman and committing a felony sex crime against another.

Weinstein had already been banished from Hollywood. The #MeToo movement, ignited more than two years ago by his dozens of accusers, started a sweeping cultural shift toward zero tolerance of sexual harassment in the workplace and society (although we still have a long way to go).

But Weinstein's conviction shows that rich and powerful people who abuse others can't always count on their clout and their bank accounts to keep them out of jail, which is where Weinstein was taken right after the verdict—apparently, much to his surprise. That's evidence of another (long overdue) cultural shift. The verdict offers a measure of vindication and hope not just for the anguished, outraged voices of the #MeToo movement but for all victims of sexual assault who put themselves through the ordeal of a court trial or, worse, never get to trial because a prosecutor deems the case too risky to win.

The #MeToo movement let victims be heard. The verdict shows that sexual harassment—even by the rich and powerful—won't always be ignored or swept under the rug. What happened to these two women was not simply bad behavior, it was criminal behavior.

That was particularly important in this complex case with its matrix of charges. Weinstein's defense attorney argued that some of the women who testified that Weinstein assaulted them later had friendly, even consensual sexual, relationships with the producer. Prosecutors countered that Weinstein kept in contact with the victims to maintain control over them.

This trial isn't the first high-profile court battle in which an accuser triumphed over a famous and powerful man. Almost two years ago, Bill Cosby was found guilty of aggravated indecent assault against Andrea Constand—just one of dozens of women who accused him of sexual assault. Now with the Weinstein verdict, we can only hope that we are seeing a trend—a sign that society has evolved and better understands what it means to be victimized by a sexual predator. (There will be more Weinstein verdicts too, because he also faces sexual assault charges in Los Angeles.)

Trials are often not the best mileposts for societal progress. They can be decided on narrow grounds by quirky juries that don't hear everything about an accuser or a victim. But in this case, Weinstein's conviction is a triumph for a society that says it will no longer tolerate sexual abuse by powerful people.

(c) 2020 Los Angeles Times



Will there ever be a right time for a woman president?

Will there ever be a right time for a woman president?

I understood why progressive voters were ambivalent at best about Hillary Clinton in 2008 and 2016. Clinton was a core part of a powerful political dynasty, with centrist policies and backed by the Democratic power structure. With that gigantic head start, it was easy to feel that Clinton's election would not be a true test of the potential for women to ascend to the highest office in the land.

But four years later, the landscape looks dramatically different.

We now have an open field that includes two staunchly progressive candidates vying strongly for the nomination, Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren. Running for the moderate vote, Amy Klobuchar is the last viable woman in the race and is facing three men, Pete Buttigieg, Joe Biden and Mike Bloomberg.

I'm not here to tell you who to vote for or to suggest you should vote for a woman just to see a woman elected. But I would encourage everyone not to count out a woman candidate over false concerns of "electability."

For all of our talk about being a model of democracy, the U.S. ranks 75th in representation of women in government. Even with a surge of women elected to the House in 2018, the U.S. doesn't rise to the worldwide average of 25% women in lower houses.

Women seeking higher office have to thread a very fine needle of double standards and biases. If you seem too ambitious, you won't be likable by both women and men. If you are too aggressive, you will seem angry, which is "not a good look." If you are too passive, you will be seen as weak.

One of the biggest and most persistent challenges for women candidates is the issue of "electability." Electability is a Catch-22 for candidates who are vying to be the first to break a barrier. You can't be elected because you aren't "electable," you aren't perceived as electable because nobody like you has ever been elected.

Democratic women running against Trump face another bind. Voters fearing another four years of Trump worry that now is not the time to take a risk on a woman candidate when sexism could be leveraged to hurt her campaign. In other words, we want a woman candidate, but now is not the right time.

While 74% of voters in a June Ipsos poll say they would be comfortable with a woman president, only 33% believed their neighbors would be. This "I am not sexist/racist/homophobic but I think everyone else is" attitude can create a fait accompli for those trying to break the most persistent glass ceiling.

The fears are not unfounded. In exit polls from 2016, those

By NAOMI ISHISAKA

The Seattle Times

Naomi Ishisaka (nishisaka@seattletimes.com) writes about race, culture and equity through a social justice lens.



who had a negative view of both Clinton and Trump still voted for Trump by 20 points. This holds up even when voters believe a woman is more qualified.

Voters are more open to women in legislative offices than they are to women in executive roles. Just nine women serve in state governor's offices across the country.

As scholar Brittney Cooper wrote in Time magazine, while simply being a woman does not make you a better leader, it matters that a candidate is a woman. "Being progressive doesn't mean that one's race or gender ceases to matter in one's leadership style and prerogatives," she wrote, "especially not in a world where gender and race are always presumed to matter for how women and people of color will govern."

Some women candidates worry talking about these dynamics reinforces them and adds to the belief that women can't win. It's a legitimate concern, but I disagree. Just as we talked about the impact of race in 2008, we should be able to talk about gender in politics and about the headwinds women (and nonbinary and trans people) face in 2020. These headwinds are compounded when you are a woman of color. Only by being honest with ourselves about how far we have to go will we be able to marshal the strategies to create a more equitable playing field.

Part of that honesty requires vigilance in calling out sexism, racism and homophobia wherever it appears, even when it's from people who support our favorite candidates.

If supporters allow sexism and sexist double standards to be the wind beneath the wings of their favorite male candidate in 2020, that should be challenged, no matter who does it. The ends never justify the means. Sanders supporter Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez modeled this solidarity beautifully in defending Warren against such attacks last week.

After 231 years, and 44 male presidents, is now finally the right time? We will see in the coming months. But what we do know is that as the campaign gets tighter, the rhetoric will get uglier and more sexist—if we let it.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Harvey Weinstein's half-conviction is a full win for prosecutors

Don't let the appearance of a split verdict in the Harvey Weinstein case mislead you: the prosecutors' decision to charge Weinstein with being a serial sexual predator was a success despite the jury's decision to acquit on those charges—even as it convicted him of two felony sex crimes, including rape.

The strategic advantage of charging Weinstein as a predator was always that it would enable the prosecution to introduce more evidence, including evidence of sexual assaults from women who were not the primary victims in this case. That extra testimony very likely contributed to the jury's decision to convict Weinstein on two felony charges. It bolstered the primary victims' testimony, notwithstanding the absence of physical evidence and other challenges associated with their cases.

The important legal background here is that, in a criminal case—including in a case of sexual assault—testimony is ordinarily limited to evidence about the specific criminal conduct alleged. If the prosecution wants to introduce evidence of other bad acts by the defendant, it needs to have a valid legal reason to do so—such as a pattern of conduct. We want juries to convict on the actual criminal charge, not because they think the defendant is generally an immoral person or prone to crimes in the abstract.

In addition to showing a pattern of conduct, another way to introduce evidence of prior bad acts in a New York State rape trial is to allege that the defendant is a predator who has committed a series of similar crimes. This charge against Weinstein was what allowed the actress Annabella Sciorra to testify that she was raped by Weinstein. (This alleged crime could not be charged on its own, because it occurred long enough ago that the statute of limitations had run out.)

It's always strategically desirable for the prosecutor to get the jury to hear about prior bad acts by a defendant. But there was a special reason to get that evidence introduced in the Weinstein case.

The cases of the two victims whose rapes constituted the primary charges against Weinstein were tricky. In neither case was there any physical evidence. And in both cases, Weinstein's lawyers insisted that the women continued to have social, professional, and sexual contact with Weinstein even after the rapes occurred.

Of course, as a matter of principle and logic, there is no reason these factors should cut against Weinstein's guilt—as the jury properly found. But in the real world, prosecutors worry about bringing rape charges under circumstances like these. And as has been well publicized, the New York District Attorney's Office itself went through a bumpy process before bringing these charges, having initially decided in 2015 not to prosecute Weinstein despite having an audio recording of him apparently admitting to a sexual assault.

The final verdict in the Weinstein case was technically split; the jury convicted on the primary rape charges but not on the sexual predation charges. But it would be a mistake to think that this means the jury rejected the evidence of Weinstein's past conduct altogether. Even if the jury wasn't fully convinced that there was evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that he committed the other rapes, the overall weight of the evidence may well have strengthened the credibility of the primary victims.

And if the jury verdict is seen as a compromise among the jurors, then the sexual predation charges may have functioned as leverage for those who wanted conviction on all counts. Such

By NOAH FELDMAN

Bloomberg News

Noah Feldman is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist and host of the podcast *Deep Background*. He is a professor of law at Harvard University and was a clerk to U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Souter. His books include *The Three Lives of James Madison: Genius, Partisan, President*.



compromises aren't exactly proper as a matter of formal legal reasoning, but they are not uncommon in the real world of jury deliberations, and prosecutors want to give as much material as possible to those jurors who support conviction.

Civil libertarian critics of this trial may argue that the sexual predation charges unfairly harmed Weinstein. Activists against sexual violence may believe that the sexual predation charges helped get a conviction and were therefore more than justified.

Both sides of this debate, however, would be acknowledging that the charges on which Weinstein was acquitted probably played a meaningful role in his ultimate conviction. The result now enters the history books—at least until Weinstein files his appeal.

Harvey Weinstein verdict shows us Oscars, wealth—even that walker—weren't enough to shield him from a fed-up world

In the end, none of Harvey Weinstein's accoutrements were enough.

Not the Oscars. Not the wealth. Not the walker.

Not the well-placed friends. Not the Gloria Steinem endowed chair he helped fund at Rutgers University in honor of his late mother, Miriam. Not the private security agencies he hired to spy on the women and the journalists trying to expose him.

Not the defense attorney who tried to put the #MeToo movement on trial.

"The pendulum is swinging so far in the overly sensitive direction that men can't really be men, and women can't really be women," Donna Rotunno told *Vanity Fair* shortly before her client's trial for felony sex crimes began. "I feel that women may rue the day that all of this started when no one asks them out on a date, and no one holds the door open for them, and no one tells them that they look nice."

In the end, it all fell like a house of cards.

Weinstein was convicted Monday of rape and sexual assault in a ruling that could send him to prison for up to 29 years. Sentencing is scheduled for March 11.

"It is a new day," District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. said after the jury of seven men and five women found Weinstein, 67, guilty. "It is a new day because Harvey Weinstein has finally been held accountable for crimes he committed. Weinstein is a vicious, serial sexual predator who used his power to threaten, rape, assault and trick, humiliate and silence his victims."

At least 100 women have accused Weinstein of sexual abuse, though just six of them — actresses Jessica Mann, Annabella Sciorra, Dawn Dunning and Tarale Wulff, production assistant Miriam Haley and scriptwriter Lauren Marie Young — testified at his trial.

"The reality is that we only got a glimpse of the lives he destroyed," Adrienne Lawrence, author of the upcoming *"Staying in the Game: The Playbook for Beating Workplace Sexual Harassment,"* wrote on Twitter Monday.

But that glimpse was a game-changer.

"Regardless of today's verdict, there is more to being a survivor than validation through the court system," Teresa C. Younger, president and CEO of the Ms. Foundation for Women, wrote in a statement after the verdict. "Telling your story and being heard and believed begins the process of ending sexual abuse by changing the systemic and cultural structures that allow people in positions of power to treat others without dignity, respect, or bodily autonomy."

"To the women who have bravely come forward to bring justice to Harvey Weinstein," Younger continued, "please know that many people around the country and across the world have heard

By HEIDI STEVENS

Chicago Tribune

Heidi Stevens is a columnist for the Chicago Tribune. Readers may email her at hstevens@chicagotribune.com.



you, believe in you, and have been lifted up by your voice."

Keep going.

New York Times reporters Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey detailed the lead-up to their Oct. 5, 2017, Weinstein bombshell in their book, *"She Said: Breaking the Sexual Harassment Story That Helped Ignite a Movement."* I went to hear them speak at the Chicago Humanities Festival in October, and they told a story about sharing a cab home from the newsroom well after midnight, just hours before their story would go public on the New York Times website.

They wondered if anyone would read it. They feared maybe not.

So many people had told them, in the course of their reporting, in the hours and weeks and months they spent chasing leads and tracking down sources and interviewing witnesses, that Weinstein was a nonstory. Hollywood's worst-kept secret. Nothing new. The way of the world.

Now that world is changing. They helped change it. As did Ronan Farrow with his reporting for the New Yorker. As did, most of all, the survivors who came forward.

And not just survivors of Weinstein. Survivors who felt an almost imperceptible shift in the culture — a nascent willingness to listen, an emerging capacity to believe, an ever-so-slight lowering of the defenses we've built to keep ourselves from grappling with the abuses of power baked into so many of our industries, our workplaces, our schools, our places of worship, our teams, our families.

Survivors who used that shift as a terrifying invitation to speak up, in whispers and shouts, about the abuse they had suffered, for far too long, in silence.

Tarana Burke founded the #MeToo movement in 2006. The Weinstein story poured gasoline on it and lit a match. And now a jury made sure the fire wasn't in vain. It's reduced Weinstein's legacy to ashes and keeps the heat where it belongs — on predators who weaponize their power and hide behind their accoutrements, hoping they'll be enough.

That world is changing. And not a moment too soon.

T.O.A.S.T.: Telling Old Age Sonnet Tales

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and has been named a poet laureate of Tinian. He has taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

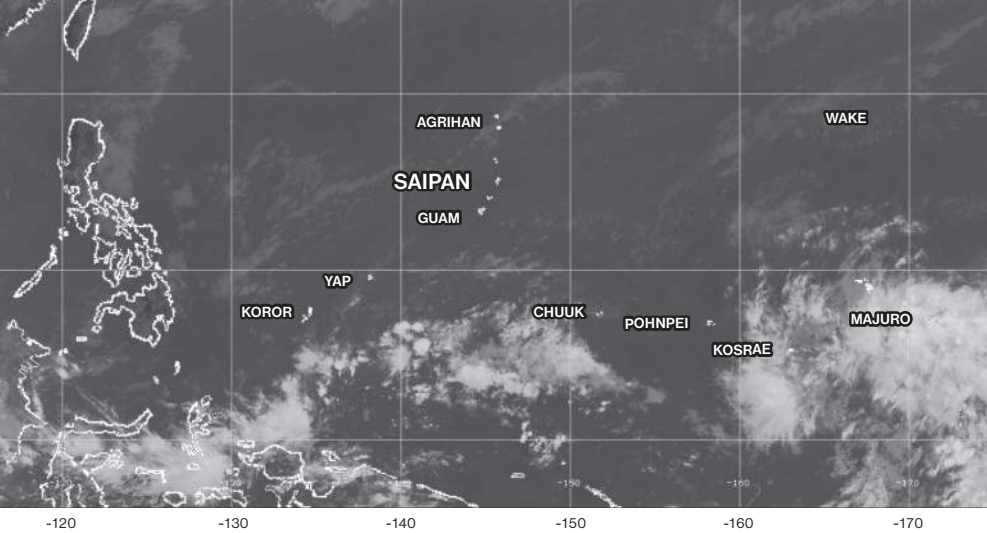
Inspiration for this poem comes from Elizabeth Bishop, U.S. Poet Laureate 1949: "the armored cars of dreams contrived to let us do many dangerous things" and a painting by 15th century painter Hieronymus Bosch, *Tondal's Last Vision*.

In the Armored Cars of Dreams

Protection, perfection, putridity, and perfidy inside your head
myriad mesmerizing selections while staying home in bed
falling in and out of love, dreadful and delightful daydreams
falling sound asleep, before waking state, in sleep very deep
deep inside Elizabeth Bishop's armored cars of dreams
reside volumes of laughter and night fright screams
REM speed developing, enveloping detriments and improvements
time and temperature differential doesn't seem to matter
Tondal's Last Vision scatters, splatters, pitter pitter patter
walking on a wire, a wheel of death revolves slowly on fire
a bed of glass, a bed of nails, a barge of death as dreamtime sails
east of Tinian dropping into the depths of the Marianas Trench
fumaroles, lava flows, a whale blows, submerged sulfuric stench
high seas, high speeds, polar bears plead, addicts need, ice feeds
typhoons terrorize the night, sea birds in flight circling to the right
jaywalking, running across melting polar ice, shooting loaded dice
and so inside the armored cars of dreams I sleep and so do you
so real, surreal, beyond reality, false memories, and some true.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
Partly cloudy. A slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.		Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.		Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	
87°	75°	87°	75°	86°	76°	86°	76°	86°	76°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 7:23 AM, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A drier trade-wind pattern is now in place across the Marianas and looks to continue for at least the next few days. Winds have subsided a bit as well, with moderate to fresh trade winds through tonight becoming gentle to moderate Thursday. A shear line is expected to move into the Marianas over the weekend, resulting in increasing winds and cloud cover. A weak circulation centered south of Kwajalein is expected to slowly move toward the Marianas over the weekend. This system is expected to weaken as it approaches and move through the region as an open trough. Latest model runs show little increase in moisture and showers with the trough, though this is our next best chance at a needed wetting rain.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	84° / 75°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°	
Chuuk	Mostly Sunny	86° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°	

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	77° / 64°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	48° / 28°	
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	73° / 66°	
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	79° / 68°	
London	Partly Cloudy	46° / 34°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	85° / 58°	
Manila	Mostly Sunny	90° / 73°	
Melbourne	Cloudy	64° / 55°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	68° / 50°	
New York	Windy	48° / 29°	
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	48° / 39°	
Paris	Rain	52° / 36°	
Busan	Showers	52° / 45°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	57° / 50°	
Salem	Sunny	51° / 30°	
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	68° / 49°	
Seoul	Showers	45° / 36°	
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	50° / 37°	
Washington, DC	Windy	43° / 29°	

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
3:54 AM	LOW TIDE	0.19	
10:06 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.64	
4:24 PM	LOW TIDE	0.56	
9:57 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.54	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Friday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Saturday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Sunday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Monday	6:33 AM	6:24 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	8:50 AM	9:14 PM	-
Friday	9:25 AM	10:00 PM	-
Saturday	10:02 AM	10:48 PM	-
Sunday	10:40 AM	11:37 PM	-
Monday	11:22 AM	5:54 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2020							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA156	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	UA112	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily
SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6				
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ6233	7:30am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1	OZ623	8:10am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	3:35am	7:20am	4	TW309	11:10am	4:40pm	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ6243	3:10pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ624	3:30pm	7:20pm	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	OZ625	9:05pm	2:25am+1	3
TW310	5:40pm	10:15pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA189/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	OZ702/625	12:05pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
UA156/183	6:20pm	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA156/193	6:20pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:35am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
OZ626/721	3:35am	11:50am	4 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:10pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:30pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
				2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
				2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
				2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

BEIJING (AP)—Factories that make the world's smartphones, toys and other goods are struggling to reopen after a virus outbreak idled China's economy.

But even with the ruling Communist Party promising help, companies and economists say it may be months before production is back to normal.

The problem is supply chains — the thousands of companies that provide components, from auto parts to zippers to microchips. China's are famously nimble and resourceful, but they lack raw materials and workers after the most intensive anti-disease measures ever imposed closed factories, cut off most access to cities with more than 60 million people and imposed travel curbs.

In smartphones, an industry that relies on China to assemble almost all its handsets, some components suppliers say production is as low as 10% of normal levels, according to Nicole Peng of Canalys, a research firm.

"The bad news is that there will be further impact, and the impact is worse than a lot of people initially expected," said Peng.

Travel and retail businesses that need Chinese customers have suffered the most so far from the partial shutdown of the second largest economy. But brands including Apple Inc. say it is starting to disrupt their supplies. Analysts warn



In this photo taken Feb. 23, 2020, workers make optical lenses in a factory in Dexing city in central China's Jiangxi province.

AP

CHINA STRUGGLES to revive manufacturing amid virus outbreak

the longer that disruption lasts, the more damage will spread to wider industries and other economies.

Global brands have used low-cost Chinese labor to assemble goods for three decades. Now, they increasingly depend on China to supply auto, computer and other components. Disruptions can make this country a bottleneck, choking off their sales.

The most optimistic forecasts call for bringing the virus under control by March, allowing manufacturing to rebound. Gloomier outlooks say the outbreak might last until mid-May or later. Or, as the World Health Organization warned this week, authorities might fail to stop its global spread.

Automakers and other factories are reopening, but ana-

lysts say they won't restore normal production until at least mid-March.

"If factory work does not spike in the coming weeks, a global parts shortage would likely emerge," Taimur Baig and Samuel Tse of DBS said in a report.

There is no indication yet of an impact on consumers abroad, but retailers are starting to warn some products

might be late or unavailable.

China also is a major supplier of chemicals for the global pharmaceutical industry. The outbreak has prompted concern supplies might be disrupted but there is no indication that drug production has been affected.

President Xi Jinping has put his personal authority behind reviving industry.

Beijing is promising tax

cuts, though economists say financial help will have limited impact when anti-disease controls still in effect are still keeping workers away from factories and disrupting the movement of goods.

On Sunday, Xi said "low-risk areas" should change disease-control measures to fully restore production while high-risk areas focus on fighting the epidemic, according to the official Xinhua News Agency.

Manufacturers face a shortage of workers after millions who visited their hometowns for the Lunar New Year holiday were stranded there by the suspension of plane, train and bus services.

Officials must "unblock transportation channels," Xinhua cited Xi as saying.

The government of Yiwu, a southeastern city known for its thousands of suppliers of buttons, doorknobs and other components to export manufacturers, says it arranged planes and trains to help their employees get back to work.

China accounts for about one-quarter of global manufacturing when measured by the value added in its factories. But it is the final assembly point for more than 80% of the world's smartphones, more than half of TVs and a big share of other consumer goods.

Apple, which has most of its iPhones and other products assembled by contractors in China, rattled stock markets when it warned Feb. 17 that revenue would suffer due to supply disruptions.

No checkout needed: Amazon opens cashier-less grocery store

NEW YORK (AP)—Amazon wants to kill the supermarket checkout line.

The online retailing giant is opening its first cashier-less supermarket, where shoppers can grab milk or eggs and walk out without waiting in line or ever opening their wallets. It's the latest sign that Amazon is serious about shaking up the \$800 billion grocery industry.

At the new store, which opened Tuesday in Amazon's hometown of Seattle, shoppers scan a smartphone app to enter the store. Cameras and sensors track what's taken off shelves. Items are charged to an Amazon account after leaving.

"I love the convenience of literally grabbing and going" said Art Kuniyuki, a payroll and benefits manager from Seattle, who spent \$15 on Barilla pasta, Dove chocolate and other groceries shortly after the store opened.

Called Amazon Go Gro-

cery, the new store is an expansion of its 2-year-old chain of 25 Amazon Go convenience stores. It's 10,400 square feet — more than five times the size of the convenience stores — and stocks much more beyond the sodas and sandwiches found at Amazon Go.

Cameron Janes, who helps oversee Amazon's physical stores, said the technology had to be tweaked to account for how people squeeze tomatoes to test for ripeness or rummage through avocados to find just the right one. Nothing at the store is weighed. One blood orange goes for 53 cents; a banana is 19 cents.

Amazon is not new to groceries. It made a splash in 2017 when it bought Whole Foods and its 500 stores. It's also been expanding its online grocery delivery service. But it's still far behind rival Walmart, the nation's largest grocer, which has more than 4,700 stores. Walmart's online

grocery service has also been popular with customers, who buy online and then drive to a store to pick up their order.

Amazon also plans to open another type of grocery store in Los Angeles sometime this year, but the company said it won't use the cashier-less technology at that location and has kept other details under wraps. The company declined to say if it plans to open more Amazon Go Grocery stores, and said there are no plans to bring the technology to Whole Foods stores.

Much of the fruits and vegetables come from the same suppliers at Whole Foods, Janes said. And it has products from the Whole Foods store brand 365, such as organic oatmeal and bagged baby carrots. But it also sells Oreos, Cheez-Its and other stuff banned from the natural grocer.

Families can shop together with just one phone scanning everyone in. Anything they

grab and leave the store with will be added to the tab of the person who signed them in. But shoppers shouldn't help out a stranger reaching for the top shelf: Amazon warns that grabbing an item for someone else means you'll be charged for it if they walk out with it.

Hoping to catch up to Amazon, other retailers and startups are racing to bring similar cashier-less technology to stores. Earlier this month, 7-Eleven said it is testing a cashier-less store for employees inside its offices in Irving, Texas.

But cashier-less stores have come under scrutiny from lawmakers and advocates who say they discriminate against low-income people who may not have a credit card or bank account. Amazon has since let customers pay with cash at its convenience stores, and the company said shoppers can do the same at the grocery store by alerting a worker to let them in through the turnstile.

Daniel, Kerbleski join Bank of Guam as vice presidents



Daniel



Kerbleski

HAGATNA, Guam— The Bank of Guam Board of directors, management, and staff are pleased to announce the following new hires:

■ Danny Daniel joins the bank as vice president/brand manager/CX administration. Daniel was previously with various local telecommunications firms in similar capacities. A graduate of Oceanview High School, he holds a degree in Business Administration from the

University of Phoenix.

■ Thomas Kerbleski is now the Bank's San Francisco branch's vice president/relationship manager. Most recently a senior acquisitions analyst with Lakeside Investment (Oakland) and a leasing executive with EB Development (San Francisco), Kerbleski graduated from Seattle University with a Finance Major and Economics Minor. (PR)

Customers First
TRIPLE J

Payless SuperFresh & Truckload Store



CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF® NY STEAK
\$10⁴⁹ LB.



CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF® FLAT IRON STEAK
\$6⁹⁹ LB.



CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF® KNUCKLE ROAST
\$4⁴⁹ LB.



CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF® CHUCK STEAK
\$4⁹⁹ LB.



PORK RIBS 3 DOWN
\$2³⁹ LB.

YOU CAN SHOP,
EARN & SAVE!



Customers First!
Rewards
Payless SuperFresh Truckload Store

SIGN UP TODAY
IT'S FREE!
ASK US HOW



ESSENTIAL EVERYDAY JUICE APPLE CONCENTRATED 12/120Z.
\$1⁹⁹ EA.



ESSENTIAL EVERYDAY LEMONADE CONCENTRATED 12/120Z.
\$1⁹⁹ EA.



MINUTE MAID ORANGE JUICE CALCIUM FORTIFIED 12/120Z.
\$3⁶⁹ EA.



COLUMBUS PROSCIUTTO SLICED 12/160Z.
\$13⁹⁹ EA.



ESSENTIAL EVERYDAY AMERICAN IWS 24CT 160Z.
\$3⁹⁹ EA.



GRAPEFRUIT RED 40 CT 38#
\$1¹⁵ LB.



LEMON CHOICE 115CT
\$1²⁹ LB.



MANDARIN CLEMENTINE (HALO)
\$3²⁹ PKG.



WATERMELON SEEDLESS
\$1¹⁹ LB.



CAULIFLOWER CELLO
\$1⁴⁹ LB.



LETTUCE CELLO (ICE BERG)
\$1⁵⁹ LB.



HDX 17GAL TOUGH STORAGE TOTE
\$14⁹⁵



SAN FRANCISCO 5FTX8FT AREA RUG
\$49⁹⁵



CRAFTSMAN LITHIUM-ION 3/8" 19.2V DRILL/DRIVER KIT
\$89⁹⁵



CYLO SOUND DISC WITH BLUETOOTH SPEAKER
\$14⁹⁵



NORTHWEST TERRITORY LIGHTWEIGHT SPORTS CHAIR
\$12⁹⁵



AUSSIE WALK-A-ABOUT PORTABLE CHARCOAL GRILL
\$79⁹⁵



COLEMAN 48QT PERFORMANCE MARINE COOLER
\$45⁹⁵



BETTER CHEF 3QT DUTCH OVEN
\$7⁹⁵



AMAZON FIRE 7 TABLET 7" 16GB
\$89⁹⁵



OSTER 10/20 CUP RICE COOKER WITH STEAMER
\$39⁹⁵



GALANZ 25L XL STAINLESS FP LARGE COUNTER TOP OVEN
\$49⁹⁵



BETTER CHEF SANDWICH MAKER
\$13⁹⁵



PROCTOR SILEX 5 SPEED HAND MIXER
\$13⁹⁵



BETTER CHEF 18-PIECE GLASSWARE SET
\$14⁹⁵



BETTER CHEF 2.5QT SAUCE PAN WITH GLASS LID
\$8⁹⁵



MAGIC CHEF 10.1 CU.FT. TOP REFRIGERATOR
\$649⁹⁵



BLACK+DECKER 0.7 CU.FT. 700W MICROWAVE OVEN
\$89⁹⁵



BETTER CHEF 0.4MM WHISTLING KETTLE
\$14⁹⁵



BETTER CHEF 1.7L GLASS CORDLESS KETTLE
\$19⁹⁵

Nation

Body cam captures 6-year-old's tearful pleas during arrest

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—A police officer's body camera shows a 6-year-old Florida girl crying and begging officers not to arrest her as one fastens zip ties around her wrists at a charter school.

The video that Kaia Rolle's family shared with the Orlando Sentinel and other media outlets Monday shows the girl being arrested in September for kicking and punching staff members at her Orlando charter school.

"What are those for?" Kaia asks about the zip ties in the video.

"They're for you," Officer Dennis Turner says before another officer tightens them around her wrists and Kaia begins weeping.

Turner was fired shortly after the arrest. Orlando Police Chief Orlando Rolon said at the time that Turner, a reserve officer, didn't follow department policy of getting the approval of a watch commander to arrest someone younger than 12.

"Help me. Help me, please!" Kaia pleads through tears.

As she is being walked to the vehicle, she cries, "I don't want to go in a police car."

The second officer, who has not been identified, responds, "You don't want to? ... You have to."

"Please, give me a second chance," Kaia says.

The video shows the officer lifting the sobbing girl into the back seat of the police vehicle and putting a seat belt around her.

A short time later, Turner returns to the office to talk to Lucious & Emma Nixon Academy administrators,



AP
In this image taken from Sept. 19, 2019, Orlando Police Department body camera video footage, Orlando Police Officer Dennis Turner leads 6-year-old Kaia Rolle away after her arrest for kicking and punching staff members at the Lucious & Emma Nixon Academy Charter School in Orlando, Fla.

old child, but I say that based on my training and experience and not that of others."

Kaye said he's had several school districts contact him since the video's release saying they want to re-examine their school resource officer programs, because they don't want something similar to happen in their schools.

Officials have said that Turner also arrested a 6-year-old boy at another school on the same day as Kaia's arrest for misdemeanor battery in an unrelated incident. However, the boy's arrest was halted by superiors before the child made it through the full arrest process.

State Attorney Aramis Ayala said last September that she was dismissing misdemeanor battery charges against both children.

who appear dismayed by what they have witnessed in the school office.

The officer tells them that the juvenile detention center where Kaia was headed is "not like you think." Turner tells the administrators he has made 6,000 arrests, including a 7-year-old.

When school employees tell the officer that Kaia is 6, not 8 like he thought, he replies, "Now she has broken the record."

Turner had worked in the police agency's reserve unit, which is mostly made up of retired officers who pick up

extra-duty jobs for pay. Because he was a reserve officer, he was not a member of the collective bargaining unit, and the police union didn't represent him, Shawn Dunlap of the Fraternal Order of Police Orlando Lodge 25, said in an email Tuesday.

School resource officers came under close scrutiny in Florida after former Broward Deputy Scot Peterson failed to engage a shooter at a Parkland high school in 2018. He was charged last year with child neglect, culpable negligence and perjury. That case is ongoing.

The Orlando case drew yet more attention to the role of police in schools.

Jeff Kaye, president of California-based School Safety Operations Inc., said in an email that the officer would not only have been fired in some other states but possibly charged with a crime, such as oppression under color of authority.

School administrators might have been better served by contacting the child's parents and working with a counselor, rather than calling police, Kaye said.

"As long as everyone is safe, take a deep breath, slow things down, and make good commonsense decisions," Kaye said. "I can't think of any reason to ever arrest a 6-year-

Generic drugmakers sold most opioids during overdose crisis

By GEOFF MULVIHILL and LARRY FENN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals doled out lavish perks for top U.S. employees who hit or beat sales goals for prescription opioids and other drugs: six-figure bonuses and a chance to snag a coveted "President's Club" award, which could mean vacations to Hawaii, the Caribbean or Mexico.

The company placed that same staff in charge of reporting any sales of its painkillers that appeared to be suspicious, including to distributors or pharmacies requesting extreme volumes of its most potent formulas. Asked during a federal court deposition last year whether she believed it was appropriate to put incentive-motivated sales staff in charge of calling out questionable sales, Karen Harper, who oversaw Mallinckrodt's suspicious order monitoring system, said yes.

In fact, as the nation's opioid overdose crisis began to explode, not a single order with the company between August 2008 and October 2010 rose from the level of "peculiar" to "suspicious," the category that

would have triggered a report to authorities, according to Harper's deposition.

The court documents reveal a company culture that allowed Mallinckrodt to become one of the giants of the prescription opioid market at a time when overdoses were claiming tens of thousands of American lives. The company, based in Great Britain, announced a tentative \$1.6 billion settlement Tuesday with state and local governments in the U.S. If finalized, the deal would end lawsuits nationwide over the company's role in the epidemic.

Purdue Pharma has been the poster child for the U.S. opioid crisis, mostly because of aggressive marketing of its signature painkiller, OxyContin. Lesser known is the role of generic opioid manufacturers like Mallinckrodt that produced the vast majority of painkillers during the height of the overdose epidemic. While they may not have been sending sales representatives to encourage prescribing like Purdue, they were filling more and more orders for the drugs — so many that Mallinckrodt couldn't always produce enough to fill them all.

Sanders takes hits while gaining spotlight as front-runner

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP)—Democrats unleashed a roaring assault against Bernie Sanders and seized on Mike Bloomberg's past with women in the workplace during a contentious debate Tuesday night that tested the strength of the two men at the center of the party's presidential nomination fight.

As the undeniable Democratic front-runner, Sanders faced the brunt of the attacks for much of the night, and for one of the few times, fellow progressive Elizabeth Warren was among the critics. The Massachusetts senator pressed the case that she could execute ideas that the Vermont senator could only talk about.

"Bernie and I agree on a lot of things," she said. "But I think I would make a better president than Bernie."

A group of moderates, meanwhile, fought to emerge as the chief Sanders alternative.

Former Vice President Joe Biden, who is seeking a strong win in South Carolina to keep

his campaign afloat, argued only he has the experience to lead in the world. Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota repeatedly contended that she alone could win the votes of battleground state moderates. And Pete Buttigieg pointed to Sanders' self-described democratic socialism and his recent comments expressing admiration for Cuban dictator Fidel Castro's push for education.

"I am not looking forward to a scenario where it comes down to Donald Trump with his nostalgia for the social order of the 1950s and Bernie Sanders with a nostalgia for the revolutionary politics of the 1960s," the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, declared.

But the moderates did little to draw separation among themselves, a dynamic that has so far only benefited the Vermont senator. Sanders fought back throughout the night, pointing to polls that showed him beating the Republican president

and noting all the recent attention he's gotten: "I'm hearing my name mentioned a little bit tonight. I wonder why?"

The intensity of Tuesday's forum, with candidates repeatedly shouting over each other, reflected the reality that the Democrats' establishment wing is quickly running out of time to stop Sanders' rise. Even some critics, Bloomberg among them, conceded that Sanders could build an insurmountable delegate lead as soon as next week.

The 10th debate of the 2020 primary season, sponsored by CBS and the Congressional Black Caucus Institute, was just four days before South Carolina's first-in-the-South primary and one week before more than a dozen states vote on Super Tuesday. The Democratic White House hopefuls will not stand side-by-side on the debate stage again until the middle of March. That made Tuesday's debate likely the last chance for some can-

didates to save themselves and alter the trajectory of the nomination fight.

Though Sanders was at the center of the attacks, the night was actually something of a high point in his political career. After spending nearly three decades as an agitator who delighted in tearing into his party's establishment, that very party establishment was suddenly fighting to take him down, a clear sign of his rising status as the leading candidate for the nomination.

Bloomberg also faced sustained attacks that gave him an opportunity to redeem himself after a bad debate debut one week earlier. Warren cut hard at his record as a businessman, bringing up reports of one particular allegation that he told a pregnant employee "to kill it," a reference to the woman's unborn child. Bloomberg fiercely denied the allegation, but acknowledged he sometimes made comments that were inappropriate.

Asia

S. Korean virus cases jump again, 1st US soldier infected

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The number of new virus infections in South Korea jumped again Wednesday and the U.S. military reported its first case among its soldiers based in the Asian country, with his case and many others connected to a southeastern city with an illness cluster.

South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Preven-

United States Forces Korea previously said a widowed dependent had the virus, the first case involving a USFK-related individual. South Korea's 600,000-member military has reported 18 cases and placed thousands of soldiers in quarantine as a precaution.

Col. Edward Ballanco, commander of the U.S. Army Garrison Daegu, said two

bowling alleys at Camp Walker and Camp Carroll and a golf course at Camp Walker were closed after the soldier's case was confirmed. All restaurants at the bases, and also Camp Henry and Camp George in Daegu, could now provide only takeout meals with soldiers and family members prohibited from

dining there, he said.

South Korea now has 1,146 confirmed infections of the virus and 11 fatalities from the COVID-19 illness it causes. The national government has been channeling medical personnel, protective suits and other supplies to Daegu, and there are concerns the local hospitals are being overwhelmed and fatigued doctors are becoming vulnerable to infections.

"This week will be criti-

A U.S. military statement said the 23-year-old soldier was in self-quarantine at his off-base residence. He had been based in Camp Carroll in a town near Daegu, and visited both Carroll and nearby Camp Walker in recent days, according to the statement.

South Korean authorities and U.S. military health professionals were tracing his contacts to determine if other people may have been exposed.

About 28,500 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea as deterrence against potential aggression from North Korea.

Coronavirus numbers

Total and new cases in last 24 hours

Globally

• 79,331 confirmed (715 new)

China

• 77,262 confirmed (415 new)
• 2,595 deaths (150 new)

Outside of China

• 2,069 confirmed (300 new)
• 29 countries (1 new)
• 23 deaths (6 new)

Risk assessment

China: Very high
Regional level: High
Global level: High

As of Feb. 24

Source: World Health Organization
Graphic: Staff, TNS



In this Thursday, Feb. 20, 2020 photo, a U.S. military policeman and South Korean security person check visitors at the U.S. Army base Camp Walker, in Daegu, South Korea. AP

cal in the fight to combat the (COVI-19) illness," Prime Minister Chung Se-kyun said at meeting in Daegu City Hall to discuss quarantine efforts.

The number of cases were expected to rise as health workers finish testing hundreds of members of the Daegu branch of a church that has the country's biggest cluster of infections. The Shincheonji Church of Jesus, which mainstream Christian organizations describe as a cult, agreed to hand over a list of 200,000

members nationwide so screenings could widen.

China, by far, still has the most cases and deaths from the illness, though its numbers have slowed recently. Chinese officials Wednesday reported another 406 cases and 52 additional deaths, all of them in hard-hit Hubei province and all but 10 in the epicenter of the city of Wuhan.

China has recorded 2,715 deaths from COVID-19 and 78,064 confirmed cases of the virus on the mainland since the

illness emerged in December.

China has put Wuhan and nearby cities under virtual quarantine for weeks, halting nearly all movement except for disease prevention, health care and supplying necessities. It has sent thousands of personnel to build and staff virus-dedicated hospitals in the epicenter region. In the capital Beijing and throughout the country, public events were canceled and factories, offices and schools closed.

Chinese banks have been

ordered to disinfect old banknotes before reissuing them to the public. State broadcaster CCTV showed staff of a state-owned bank in Shanghai putting old banknotes under ultraviolet disinfection and putting them into a vault. The bank told CCTV money removed from high-risk sites such as hospitals and markets would not be returned to circulation. Other banknotes will be disinfected and sealed for at least 7 days before being recirculated, the bank said.

ASIA BRIEFS

Hong Kong plans handouts, tax cuts to counter economic woes

HONG KONG (AP)—Hong Kong's government is proposing a nearly \$1,300 cash handout for each resident over 18 years old to help alleviate hardships brought on by the spreading viral outbreak and prolonged political protests. The subsidy was among a slew of emergency measures in a budget presented to the city's legislature Wednesday by Financial Secretary Paul Chan. "I consider that, with ample fiscal reserves, the government has to increase public expenditure amid an economic downturn to stimulate the economy and ride out the difficult times with members of the public," Chan said. The downturn in tourism and business activity from the virus outbreak has compounded the troubles brought on by months of often violent protests last year. The financial center is deploying its more than 1 trillion Hong Kong dollars (\$140 billion) in reserves to help counter the economic contraction and shore up public support for the government.

Malaysian king meets more lawmakers to end political vacuum

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—Malaysia's king held unusual consultations with lawmakers for a second day Wednesday to resolve a political vacuum caused by the abrupt collapse of the ruling coalition and the resignation of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad. The king's role is largely ceremonial in Malaysia, but he appoints the person with majority support in Parliament as prime minister. Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah met with 83 lawmakers on Tuesday and is meeting the remaining 139 now to determine who they support as prime minister and if they want fresh elections. Mahathir's

Bersatu party ditched the ruling alliance Monday but failed to form a new government with parties to thwart an agreed transition of power to Anwar Ibrahim. The 94-year-old Mahathir resigned as premier and Bersatu chairman in what allies say was a protest of his party's plan to work with the former corrupt regime that he had ousted in 2018 elections. The departure of 37 lawmakers, including 11 from Anwar's party, deprived the governing Alliance of Hope of majority rule and sparked a crisis less than two years after its election victory ousted a corrupt-tainted coalition that had ruled for 61 years.

Australian and Israeli leaders discuss extradition wrangle

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Australia's prime minister and Israel's president on Wednesday discussed an extradition request for a former school principal whose alleged abuse of Australian school girls has cast a shadow over the Israeli leader's visit. Prime Minister Scott Morrison and President Reuven Rivlin discussed their "strong commitment to seeing justice" in the case of the former principal Malka Leifer during a meeting at Parliament House, officials said. Leifer has been fighting extradition from Israel for six years and the legal wrangle to bring her before an Australian court has caused a diplomatic strain between the allies. Rivlin has been criticized for declining an invitation to meet three alleged victims during his visit this week to the Australian city of Melbourne where Leifer was the principal of an ultra-Orthodox Jewish school until 2008. The three siblings who allege they were abused—Dassi Erlich, Nicole Meyer and Elly Sapper—have been at the center of public campaign to bring Leifer before an Australian court.

Hindu-Muslim clashes kill 18 in Delhi as Modi, Trump talk

NEW DELHI (AP)—As Air Force One flew President Donald Trump and his delegation out of New Delhi late Tuesday, Muslim families huddled in a mosque in a northeast corner of the city, praying Hindu mobs wouldn't burn it down.

The death toll from three days of mob violence rose to 18 on Wednesday, according to a doctor at a hospital where many of the injured were treated, casting a shadow over Trump's flamboyant first state visit to India.

The clashes between Hindu mobs and Muslims protesting a contentious new citizenship law that fast-tracks naturalization for foreign-born religious minorities of all major faiths in South Asia except Islam escalated Tuesday, according to Rouf Khan, 43, a resident of Mustafabad, an area in north-east New Delhi.

Khan said the mobs were

wielding iron rods, bricks and bamboo sticks and attacked the homes of Muslims amid chants of "Jai Shri Ram," or "Victory to Lord Ram," the popular Hindu god of the religious epic "Ramayana."

"After forcing inside the homes, they went on a rampage and started beating people and breaking household items," said Khan, adding that he and his family had to run out of fear and take shelter inside a nearby mosque that he said was guarded by thousands of Muslim men.

"I don't know if our house was burned or not, but when we were running away we heard them asking people to pour kerosene and burn everything down," Khan said.

Eighteen people have died since Monday, some of with bullet wounds, according to Sunil Kumar, medical director of the Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital.

World

Violence, industry co-exist in conservative Mexican state

IRAPUATO, Mexico (AP)—Mexico's drug war has long played out in dusty northern border cities or the poppy fields of its southern mountains, but now the killings have moved to the conservative industrial heartland state of Guanajuato, creating a strange duality: shiny new auto plants and booming foreign investment even as the state becomes Mexico's most violent.

Gleaming four-lane highways pass sprawling automotive plants and people carry yoga mats and sip chai at outdoor cafes in upscale suburbs. Several new luxury subdivisions spring up every year in the state's colonial city of San Miguel de Allende, which is popular with foreigners.

But Guanajuato's visible wealth contrasts with its grim headlines: Seven men lined up in a junkyard and shot. Gunmen open fire in a roadside eatery, leaving nine customers dead in a lake of blood. Seven people are gunned down at a street-side taco stand.

That was just one week in late January when the government said Guanajuato, which has around 5% of Mexico's population, suffered 20% of its homicides. In 2019, the state had a homicide rate of about 61 per 100,000 inhabitants, making it Mexico's most violent.

It is not the auto plant executives or foreigners who are getting killed, as local officials



This Feb. 13, 2020 photo shows a memorial for Juan Carlos Medina Serrano in his family's living room, the day his remains were buried, in Irapuato, Guanajuato state, Mexico.

like to point out. The violence arises from a bloody war between the home-grown Santa Rosa de Lima gang and the powerful Jalisco New Generation Cartel, which is waging a major offensive to move into Guanajuato. The state is attractive to drug cartels for the same reason it is to auto manufacturers — road and rail networks that lead straight to the

U.S. border.

The head of the state's security commission, Sofia Huett, defines Guanajuato's odd dynamic this way: "Sometimes people confuse the violence with a lack of public safety in Guanajuato, and in fact they are two different things."

What Huett apparently means is that what officials define as decent, law-abiding

people aren't being killed. Criminals are killing criminals is a refrain repeatedly heard, along with the belief that most of the criminals are from outside the deeply Roman Catholic state — a reference to the invading gang from Jalisco and violence spilling over from Michoacan.

"The murders in Guanajuato are not killings carried

out during robberies," Huett said. For example, she notes that muggings in the state are among the lowest in the nation. "The majority of crimes, the ones that most affect inhabitants, are well below the national average."

Most investors — and even local officials — seem prepared to ignore the wave of homicides as just gang members

killing gang members.

"There are victims who are caught in the crossfire, and they are the ones I really feel sorry for," said Ricardo Ortiz, mayor of the city of Irapuato. "But we can't be expected to protect people who are doing bad things."

Moises Guerrero, mayor of Apaseo El Grande, where a new, \$1 billion Toyota pickup assembly plant opened this month, also minimizes the spillover of the gang war onto citizens and investors. Referring to targeted killings by cartel gunmen, Guerrero said: "They don't make mistakes. They go after the person they are after."

Huett says that "between 80 and 85% of the homicides in Guanajuato are related to criminal activities." She also points the finger at people from out of state. "If we look at 10 people who have been arrested, often of those 10 only one or two of the suspects come from Guanajuato."

That kind of statement has caused untold grief for crime victims like Alondra Mora, whose husband, Miguel Flores Lopez, disappeared Jan. 10 after he was dragged from his taxi by armed men. Mora chokes up as she shows a photo of him in the humble house they rented on the outskirts of Irapuato. The house is so tiny that visitors' knees touch when they sit in armchairs in the living room.

UN Security Council approves resolution on Yemen sanctions

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—The U.N. Security Council approved a resolution Tuesday extending targeted sanctions for war-torn Yemen following contentious negotiations among the council's member nations.

Among the disputes had been whether to refer to U.N. experts' findings that Yemen's Houthi Shiite rebels are receiving parts for drones and weapons, some with technical characteristics similar to arms manufactured in Iran.

Britain, which drafted the resolution, and the U.S. and other Western nations supported the inclusion of the experts' findings, but Russia and China objected. The much-revised British draft that was put to a vote and approved 13-0 eliminated all references to the Houthis and Iran, but Russia and China said their demands still were not fully met and abstained.

That appeared to surprise

Britain and its Western allies who thought after last-minute negotiations into the early afternoon that all 15 council members would vote "yes."

British Ambassador Karen Pierce expressed disappointment, saying, "If countries are going to engage in negotiations with us in detail and then not support the text, then that in my mind is sharp practice."

In a broader comment clearly aimed at Russia, she warned against the threat of a veto becoming "simply a negotiating tactic," stressing the need for compromise to ensure the Security Council meets its responsibilities to ensure international peace and security.

France's ambassador, Nicolas de Riviere, said a compromise solution was found to maintain the unity of the council, and "it is therefore all the more regrettable that this unity dropped away at the time of the vote."

He said resolutions are "the fruit of compromise" and no member should expect to get all their demands.

Russian Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia countered that "our objections to a host of provisions of the British past draft" were raised during negotiations and a number were taken into account only on Tuesday.

He said provisions in the text still "go beyond the objectives of this resolution," and Russia was presented with "a take-it-or-leave-it approach which does not allow for compromise."

"We cannot agree to that kind of approach," Nebenzia said.

He said the council needs to avoid divisions when the situation in Yemen requires collective effort to help achieve a cease-fire and start political negotiations and restore peace. "This could have been agreed to calmly without drama," Nebenzia said.

6 European nations report virus cases with Italy link

BERLIN (AP)—Six European countries announced cases of COVID-19 disease Tuesday in people who had recently traveled from northern Italy, where the virus emerged as a fast-growing cluster last week.

For Switzerland, Austria and Croatia it was the first confirmed new coronavirus cases in those countries. Germany, France and Spain, which had previously reported cases, confirmed new infections in people who were from or had visited northern Italy.

A 70-year-old man from Switzerland's southern canton (state) of Ticino, which borders Italy, tested positive after returning from a trip to Milan, the head of the Swiss Federal Office for Public Health said.

The man is being isolated at a clinic in Lugano while authorities try to trace anyone he had contact with, Pascal Strupler said. It is the first case in Switzerland, but Strupler said it was likely the country would see more in future.

Croatia also confirmed its

first case Tuesday in a man who had traveled to Milan.

Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic said it's a "younger man, with a mild form of the disease" and that he has "been isolated and his condition is good."

Authorities in the western Austrian state of Tyrol said the country's first two cases involved a woman and a man, both 24-years-old and from the Bergamo area in Lombardy. They had driven to Austria in their private car on Friday, the same day the coronavirus cases in Italy spiked.

The woman fell ill Saturday and developed a fever Sunday, said Guenter Weiss, a senior doctor at Innsbruck's university hospital. The woman's boyfriend got a fever and a sore throat Sunday.

The couple reported themselves to authorities late Monday. Both are in a stable condition with only mild symptoms but will be kept in isolation until the weekend, said Weiss.

"We have to work on the assumption that due to the prox-

imity to Italy, one or the other case may still come," he added.

Franz Katzgraber, the head of the Tyrol state health department, said authorities are currently tracing possible contacts the patients may have had in Austria. Local daily Tiroler Tageszeitung reported that the woman worked at a hotel in the center of Innsbruck, which was temporarily ordered closed.

Herbert Kickl of Austria's opposition far-right Freedom Party immediately called for border crossings to be "reduced to a minimum."

"Everything must be done to stop the virus from spreading further in Austria," said Kickl, who also called for illegal immigrants and asylum-seekers to be put in quarantine.

But Italy's health minister, Roberto Speranza, said late Tuesday after meeting with counterparts from neighboring countries including Austria, Switzerland and Croatia that they had agreed closing borders would be "inappropriate."

Environment

Climate study shows methane 'burp' from melting Arctic tundra is unlikely

By **DEBORAH SULLIVAN BRENNAN**
THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

New research by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the University of Rochester eases long-standing fears that thawing Arctic permafrost could belch out mass amounts of climate-warming methane gas.

Scientists had warned of a scenario in which the thawing tundra could release enough methane to sharply accelerate global warming. However, the study published Friday in the journal *Science* found that permafrost that melted during a previous warm period between 18,000 and 8,000 years ago released little of the greenhouse gas. So it's likely that the permafrost won't contribute much methane during the ongoing warming period, they said.

That conclusion offers a rare glimmer of hope on the typically gloomy climate change front, the study authors said.

"Because so much of the climate stories are bad news, I'm very glad to be able to share some good news for a change," said Jeff Severinghaus, a geoscientist at Scripps and an author on the study.

Permafrost consists of soil that has been continuously frozen, even during the summer, for more than a year. It's mostly found in Siberia, Alaska, and Northern Canada, and in some cases has been iced-in for millennia.

When the permafrost thaws with rising temperatures, the ice melts and the soil below becomes waterlogged, creating low-oxygen conditions, according to Scripps Oceanography. That allows microbes in the soil to consume the carbon and produce methane.

Methane gas consists of four hydrogen atoms bonded to a carbon atom, and is a potent greenhouse gas—80 times more powerful than carbon dioxide, Severinghaus said. Scientists had projected that an eruption of methane from thawing permafrost could add an additional 2 degrees Fahrenheit of warming to the ongoing temperature rise over the next century, he said.

"Burning fossil fuels is heating the planet, that's for sure," he said. "The worry was that ... would cause an extra warming because of the release of methane from tundra."

To test that premise, Severinghaus worked with other researchers at Scripps and the University of

Rochester to test ancient air trapped in polar ice. University of Rochester graduate student Michael Dyonisius led the study with his adviser, Vasilii Petrenko, a professor of earth and environmental sciences, and one of Severinghaus' former students at Scripps Oceanography.

The team drilled and collected ice cores from Taylor Glacier in Antarctica, where they could find bubbles with small caches of pure, ancient air trapped inside.

Each tiny air sample contained minute amounts of methane, a gas found in the atmosphere at only one part per million. Then they examined the proportion of carbon isotopes in the methane molecules to determine the age of the gas. Ordinary carbon has 12 neutrons, but carbon-14 is a radioactive form of the chemical with two extra neutrons and a short lifespan. It decays within 5,000 years on average, so it acts as a reliable age indicator, Severinghaus said.

"Think of it like a dye," he said. "It doesn't change the behavior of the carbon, but it allows you to track it, as if you put some red dye in a stream."

By looking at the proportion of carbon-12 and carbon-14 in the gas samples, they could tell whether it was "young methane"—generated recently—or "ancient methane." That allowed them to calculate how much the thawing tundra contributed to atmospheric methane levels during the last period of glacial melt.

"The concentration of methane told us how much was released, and the isotopes told us which kind—was it young or old methane?" Severinghaus said. "We can say with great confidence now that tundra methane did not contribute to atmospheric methane at all, during the last time that the world warmed a lot."

That's not to say that the thawing permafrost didn't release methane. Instead, he and his co-authors believe that other soil bacteria break down the gas before it reaches the atmosphere, buffering a surge of the greenhouse gas.

"Think of the bacteria as being our friends," he said. "They eat methane before it can get out of the soil."

The *Science* report follows on the heels of another paper that the authors published in the journal *Nature* on Wednesday, using the same chemical calculations based on carbon type. That study, which analyzed ice core samples from Greenland, concluded that human-caused fossil fuel methane emissions have been under-



A thin section of an ice core collected at Taylor Glacier in Antarctica. The ice core samples contain tiny air bubbles with small quantities of ancient air trapped inside. The researchers use a melting chamber to extract the ancient air from the bubbles and then study its chemical composition.

AP

estimated by as much as 40 percent.

Most of that comes from fossil fuel extraction, Severinghaus said, "mostly from fracking and oil and gas drilling, accidental releases

during drilling of oil."

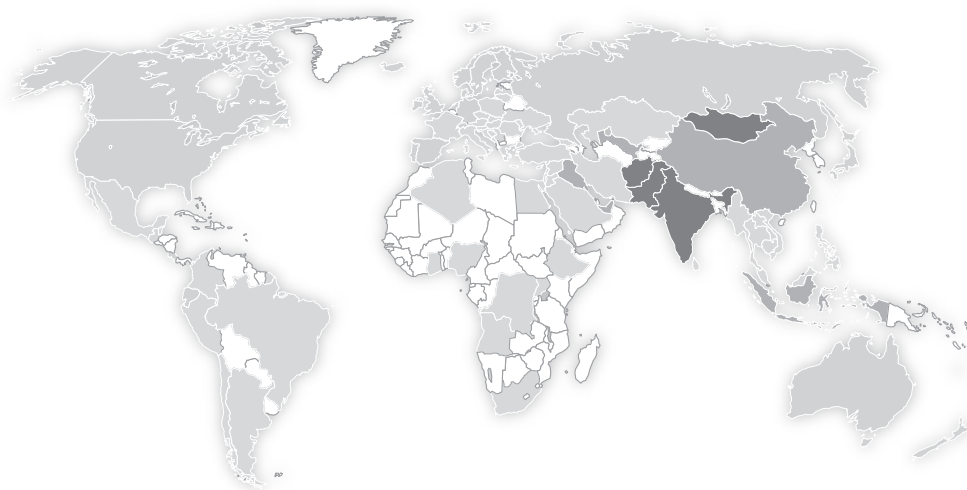
If there's a silver lining in that finding, though, it's the recognition that stricter controls on oil and gas operations could curb that source, he said.

"It is actually very hopeful, because it means we have control," he said. "We have some ability to curtail it by passing laws that require drillers to be more careful."

Most polluted countries 2019

Air quality based on ground monitoring stations that measure levels of fine particulate matter per cubic meter.

■ Good ■ Moderate ■ Unhealthy for sensitive groups ■ Unhealthy



Cities with the worst air quality

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Ghaziabad, India | 6. Noida, India |
| 2. Hotan, China | 7. Gurugram, India |
| 3. Gujranwala, Pakistan | 8. Raiwind, Pakistan |
| 4. Faisalabad, Pakistan | 9. Greater Noida, India |
| 5. Delhi, India | 10. Bandhwari, India |

Source: IQAir AirVisual's 2019 World Air Quality Report, Graphic: Staff, TNS

Life & Style

Sustainable, versatile, global, delicious: Honey's got buzz

By KATIE WORKMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Honey isn't just honey anymore. At farmers markets, grocery stores and restaurants, there's a wide assortment of honeys in various colors and tastes, from far-away places and ones next door.

Why is a food that's been part of the human diet for millennia suddenly so trendy?

First, of course, honey is delicious and versatile. It can be used in baking, dressings, marinades, sauces, cocktails—in all sorts of dishes both savory and sweet.

It is sweeter than straight sugar, so you can use less.

Honey is produced all over the world, so as we explore new cuisines, we're seeing the many ways honey can be utilized.

Increased awareness of the importance of bees and pollination also has a lot to do with why people are seeking out honey, says Lori Jean Levy, CEO and owner of My Global Table, an importer of specialty goods. Bee populations have plummeted, she notes, threatening the food supply.

"This makes it a true current events issue," she says. Honey is a sustainable and eco-friendly product at a time when many consumers are making that a priority.

Elyse Hohnerlein, operations coordinator for Savannah Bee Honey, in Savannah, Georgia, notes that honey producers support "both the beekeepers and the bees."



This Feb. 24, 2020 photo taken in New York, shows some of the many brands and types of honey available today.

KATIE WORKMAN VIA AP

"People are wanting to make the environment a better place, and honey is a delicious way of getting to that goal," she says.

A preference for local food has also boosted the popularity of honey, says Hohnerlein. She says there are more than 300 types of honey in the United States alone, and Savannah Bee bottles 15 different types of liquid honey from around the world.

She explains that raw, artisanal honey is often monofloral (from one pollen source) and is labeled with

that plant name, such as sourwood, lavender or orange blossom. Honey takes on some of the flavor of its pollen source. She also says sales of honeycomb have spiked over the past few years.

Levy says that unlike processed honey, raw honey "is neither heated or filtered." Those processes, she says, removes much of raw honey's nutritional punch.

One of her favorite imports is Happy Honey, a raw honey from Serbia that is pollinated from sunflowers.

Maria Loi, chef and owners of Loi Estiatorio in New York City, started her own line of organic honey.

"Thankfully people are going back to nature," says Loi, and are interested in where their food comes from. She packages two kinds of honey from Greece, one of them a Wild Forest Black Honey that comes from the mountains near Delphi. Loi says she harvested honey there with her grandfather as a child. The honey is available for collecting only for a few days each summer.

Raw honey is a nuanced food, comparable to wine in the way it can be tasted and considered. And because it is a product of nature, it is always changing. Dara Bliss Davenport, a chef and partner at Loi Brand, notes that the color can vary from bottle to bottle even for honey from the same hive. The language she uses to describe the flavor of Loi's black honey is similar to the way oenophiles talk about wine: "not as sweet, with notes of burnt caramel, and a pronounced molasses flavor with a citrus finish."

But honey's popularity goes beyond food. It has been touted for various health and beauty benefits too over the years. Manuka honey is particularly popular and pricey these days. It is pollinated from the manuka bush or tree in New Zealand, which flowers for only six to eight weeks a year. There are different grades of manuka honey, including ones intended to be used as food and others for medicinal purposes.

Kyle Barnholt, an executive at the honey company Manuka Health says exports of New Zealand Manuka Honey to North America have tripled over the past three years.

Finally, honey is beautiful. It ranges from a pale golden color to a deep almost-black.

That feeds into the graze board craze. Graze boards are large boards or platters carrying cheeses, charcuterie, and other nibbles, and honey is often a companion to these items and part of the presentation. Honeycomb, in particular, is a beautiful and popular addition to a graze board.

Matthews apologizes for Nazi analogy to Sanders victory

NEW YORK (AP)—MSNBC's Chris Matthews apologized Monday to Bernie Sanders for comparing the Democratic senator's win in the Nevada caucus to the Nazi takeover of France.

Matthews' self-described "bad" analogy deepened the discontent that the presidential candidate and his supporters have been feeling lately toward the cable network, one that is usually friendly territory for liberals.

"Sen. Sanders, I'm sorry for comparing anything from that tragic era in which so many suffered, especially the Jewish people, to an electoral result in which you were the well-

served winner," Matthews said at the opening of his show, "Hardball," on Monday evening.

He said he'd try to do a better job elevating the debate this campaign season. He made the Nazi remark during his network's coverage of Nevada results on Saturday night.

Even before Matthews' analogy, a report in The New York Post said the Vermont senator had confronted MSNBC's president, Phil Griffin, before the Las Vegas debate last week and said the network had not been fair to his campaign. MSNBC would not comment on the story.

In some respects, it recalls tweets

of protest that come from President Donald Trump when he hears things he doesn't like on Fox News Channel, the network where many of his fans congregate. MSNBC has a liberal prime-time lineup led by Rachel Maddow, while conservatism reigns at Fox, led by Sean Hannity.

Matthews had said Saturday that he was reminded of a French general reporting to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill that France had fallen to Germany in the summer of 1940.

"Churchill says, 'how can it be over? You've got the greatest army in Europe. How can it be over,'" Matthews said. "He said, 'it's over.'"

Sanders' communications chief, Mike Casca, tweeted that he "never thought part of my job would be pleading with a national news network to stop likening the campaign of a Jewish presidential candidate whose family was wiped out by the Nazis to the third Reich. But here we are."

It wasn't even the only Nazi reference on the network last week. Chuck Todd had earlier read from a commentary in the digital publication The Bulwark that compared Sanders supporters to a "digital brownshirt brigade" that hounded opponents and enforced discipline—much like Trump's.

AP: US opera union probe finds Plácido Domingo abused power

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—An investigation into legendary singer Plácido Domingo by the U.S. union representing opera performers found more than two dozen people who said they were sexually harassed or witnessed inappropriate behavior by the superstar when he held senior management positions at Washington National Opera and Los Angeles Opera, according to people familiar with the findings.

The investigation, conducted by lawyers hired by the American Guild of Musical Artists, concluded that the accounts from 27 people showed



Domingo

a clear pattern of sexual misconduct and abuse of power by Domingo spanning at least two decades, according to those who spoke to The Associated Press on condition

of anonymity because they were not authorized to disclose the findings.

In response to a request for comment from the AP, Domingo issued a statement saying: "I have taken time over the last several months to reflect on the

allegations that various colleagues of mine have made against me. I respect that these women finally felt comfortable enough to speak out, and I want them to know that I am truly sorry for the hurt that I caused them. I accept full responsibility for my actions, and I have grown from this experience."

The union's investigation was the first of two independent inquiries launched after multiple women accused Domingo of sexual harassment and abusing his power in two AP stories published last year. The second inquiry, still ongoing, was launched

by LA Opera, where Domingo had been general director since 2003 before resigning in October.

According to the people familiar with the contents of the union's investigation, lawyers from the firm Cozen O'Connor interviewed 55 people from September until late December. In addition to the 27 who said they experienced or witnessed sexually suggestive behavior on the part of Domingo in the 1990s and 2000s, 12 others said they were aware of the star's reputation and that it was common knowledge at the two companies.

Hot Pockets heir gets 5 months in prison for college scam

BOSTON (AP)—An heir to the Hot Pockets fortune was sentenced to five months in prison Tuesday for trying to cheat and bribe her daughters' way into school as part of a nationwide college admissions scam.

Michelle Janavs, whose father and uncle invented the microwaveable Hot Pockets turnovers before selling their company, showed no emotion as the judge delivered his sentence after she apologized for abandoning her moral compass and hurting her family and friends.

"I am so very sorry that I tried to create an unfair advantage for my children," she said.

The judge told Janavs that prison time was needed to deter others who might have the gall to use their wealth to break the law and dismissed her argument that her actions were motivated by a love for her children.

The "vast majority of parents do not brazenly try to push their kids in the side door" of universities through bribery, U.S. District Judge Nathaniel Gorton said. "They don't love their children any less than you do. They just play by the rules of common decency and fair play."

Michael Douglas, Zeta-Jones to co-host Jerusalem ceremony

JERUSALEM (AP)—Hollywood power couple Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones are set to return to Israel as co-hosts of this year's Genesis Prize ceremony.

The Genesis Prize Foundation announced Wednesday that the pair would co-host the June 18 event, where former Soviet dissident and Israeli politician Natan Sharansky is to be honored as the 2020 laureate.

Douglas, 75, was the 2015 winner of the prestigious \$1 million prize, granted each year in recognition of professional achievement, contribution to humanity and commitment to Jewish values and Israel. He is recognized for his cinematic work and advocacy for disarmament as a U.N. Messenger of Peace.

Douglas, whose mother wasn't Jewish and himself

is intermarried, directed his award toward promoting diversity and inclusion directed his award toward projects promoting diversity and inclusiveness in the Jewish world.

"Catherine and I look forward to returning to Israel, a country our entire family loves so much," Douglas said in a statement. "We are particularly honored to have the opportunity to host the ceremony honoring a true Jewish hero, Natan Sharansky."

Douglas said the visit will also be a way for his family to honor the memory of his father, Kirk Douglas, who died on Feb. 6 at the age of 103. Kirk Douglas, born Issur Danielovitch and raised in a religious home, reconnected with his Jewish roots in his later years and had a strong connection to Israel.

Singer Duffy says rape, captivity, led to her public retreat

NEW YORK (AP)—Grammy-winning singer Duffy says she's been out of the public limelight for years to focus on recovering from being "drugged and raped and held captive over some days."

The Welsh performer said in a revealing Instagram post Tuesday that it has taken time to recover and asked her fans to support her. She said she shared more in an interview that will be published soon.

"You wonder why I did not choose to use my voice to express my pain? I did not want to show the world the sadness in my eyes. I asked myself, 'How can I sing from the heart if it is broken?' And slowly it unbroke," she wrote.

Duffy's 2008 debut album, "Rockferry," won the best pop vocal album Grammy. The song "Mercy" from the album topped the U.K. singles chart.



AP
In this Nov. 17, 2010 file photo, British singer Duffy poses for photographs in West London.

She released her sophomore album, "Endlessly," in 2010 but has barely released since.

She did not reveal more

details and asked for respect during her "gentle move" toward revealing more. A representative for Duffy did not immediately return a message seeking comment.

"If you have any questions I

would like to answer them, in the spoken interview, if I can. I have a sacred love and sincere appreciation for your kindness over the years. You have been friends. I want to thank you for that," she wrote.

Next for Weinstein: Sentencing, appeal and another rape case

NEW YORK (AP)—A day after a jury branded Harvey Weinstein a convicted rapist, the former film producer remained at a New York City hospital on Tuesday, his new life as an inmate interrupted by concerns about high blood pressure and heart palpitations.

Lawyers for the 67-year-old Weinstein said he was buoyed by plans to appeal Monday's sexual assault and rape conviction, and that the detour to Bellevue Hospital on the way to the city's notorious Rikers Island prison complex was precautionary.

"He's in pretty good spirits. He's energized," Weinstein lawyer Arthur Aidala said.

Elsewhere, it was Weinstein's accusers who were feeling energized.

They've continued to herald the verdict in the landmark #MeToo case as a sign that women's voices are being heard, with some even saying they're ready to testify in his looming California criminal case, if asked.

WILL WEINSTEIN GO TO JAIL ONCE HE LEAVES THE HOSPITAL?

Aidala said Weinstein wasn't handcuffed when they greeted each other Tuesday in a large hospital room as jail officers stood guard outside. He said that Weinstein was looking forward to visitors and it wasn't clear how long he would be there.

If Weinstein gets discharged from Bellevue, it's likely he'll

end up at a protective unit at the city's Rikers Island jail facility. It'll be a short stay because he'll be moved to a state prison after sentencing.

While it's up to the city's corrections department to decide where inmates are housed, Judge James Burke said he'd ask that Weinstein be placed in the jail's North Infirmary Command, where he'd have "something tantamount to protective custody."

Martin Horn, a former city corrections commissioner, said that despite its name, the infirmary is more like a regular jail than a hospital unit.

Built in 1932 as the original Rikers Island Hospital, the infirmary now has smaller, 10-cell blocks that are used for protective units for inmates

who might be targets in general population, such as sex offenders and former law enforcement officers.

Horn said the city's jails have specialized units for the disabled but inmates with serious medical needs are often sent to the hospital ward at Bellevue.

In lobbying to keep Weinstein out of jail after the verdict, his lawyer, Donna Rotunno, told Burke that he has back injuries stemming from a car crash last summer and a condition that requires shots in his eyes, so he does not go blind.

After visiting with Weinstein Tuesday, Aidala told reporters: "He's not the picture of health by any stretch of the imagination."

Wife grows anxious as man grows closer to her sister

DEAR ABBY: I've been married to my husband for 21 years. We've had our ups and downs, but our relationship is solid.

For the last year, I have watched as my husband has become closer to my sister. It started with phone calls every once in a while to check on how she's doing. (She lives in our second home in a different state.) Then it turned into hours-long conversations a few times a week. When I told him it made me very uncomfortable, he said they are just "very, very good friends."

About six months ago, he started calling me by her name at inappropriate times. I told him he has been murmuring her name in my ear while we're in bed. He said he was sorry, and he would make some changes to the relationship with my sister. The changes he made were to talk to her every night for hours at a time. Then he needed to go to our other house "to get it ready for winter." He was alone with her for two weeks and then extended his stay by another week because she is "having health issues."

I told him I think he's having an emotional affair with my sister, but he disagreed. I'm in constant panic mode and don't know what to do. Any advice?

SUSPICIOUS IN THE NORTHWEST

DEAR SUSPICIOUS: I don't blame you for being as upset as you are because, to say the least, what your husband

has been doing is inappropriate. Have you talked to your sister about this? If you haven't, you should.

I am surprised that you didn't go with him when he went to visit "Sissy" and help her with her "health issues." That he extended his stay with her makes me wonder if there may be more going on than an emotional affair.

You need more support than a newspaper column can provide. Make an appointment with a licensed marriage and family therapist, if only to calm your panic and gain an ally. If you can convince your husband to go, it might allay your fears. But if he isn't interested—go alone.

DEAR ABBY: I have a dream job and enjoy every part of it, except for the lunch hour. The time for my break isn't debatable, nor is the area. We have a specific area for eating, and we aren't supposed to bring food to our work station.

During lunch time, seven to 10 people talk politics every day. It doesn't help that we are on opposite sides of the fence, but even if we weren't, I'm tired of all the nastiness on both sides.

I have politely asked them to discuss topics other than politics. I even talked to my boss about it, but he said it's not up to him what people talk about on their down time. Sometimes he joins us in the lunchroom and contributes to the topic. One of my co-workers is eight months pregnant, and she gets so worked up, I worry she'll go into premature labor. What should

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



my next step, short of quitting, be?

LOSING MY APPETITE

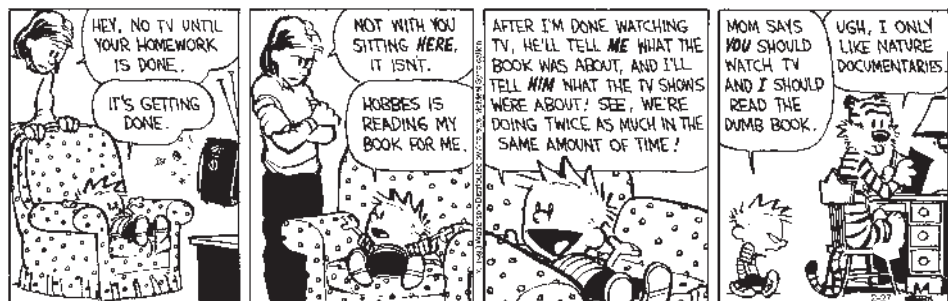
DEAR LOSING: Unless there is a rule specifying that you must eat your lunch inside the office, consider taking your lunch break outside. When the weather is mild, it could be a nice, quiet break. If it's too cold to eat outside, you could do it in your car and listen to music. However, if that's not possible, the solution to your problem might be as simple as noise-canceling headphones.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

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By Jim Davis



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By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Peace-keeping org.
5 Highland hat
8 Broadway offering
12 Black, in verse
13 New Deal agcy.
14 Carton sealer
15 "Waterloo" group
16 Always, in verse
17 Picnic invaders
18 Hester with a scarlet "A"
20 Advanced math
22 Brawl
26 Viny shelter
29 "Exodus" hero
30 Half of XIV
31 Any time now
32 QB's goals
33 Crooked

DOWN

34 Author Fleming
35 Shock partner
36 Ding-a-lings
37 Brawl
40 Millinery
41 Brittle candy
45 Modern taxi rival
47 La-la lead-in
49 Has a bug
50 Barking critter
51 Corn serving
52 Lose it
53 Opie's dad
54 — Beta Kappa
55 Nash-ville's st.
56 Short-ened wd.
57 Country singer Keith
58 Endlessly
59 12-year-old, for one
60 Mimic
61 Constant sufferers
62 Step
63 Morning-after woe
64 Select, with "for"
65 Director Craven
66 Fish-fowl link
67 MLB stat
68 Con-sumerist
69 Sty cry
70 Young foxes
71 "Dream on!"
72 Bellow
73 Fool
74 Ballroom dance
75 Northern Ireland city
76 Sternwart
77 "Let's Get Loud" singer, to fans
78 Primitive
79 Arcade pioneer
80 Speeding penalty
81 Flair
82 "NFL Live" channel
83 Olympics chant
84 London's Big —
85 Fan's cry

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 2-27

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Josh Groban, 39; Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas, 49; Donald Logue, 54; Howard Hesseman, 80.

Happy Birthday: Take command of your personal life, health and the events you decide to participate in this year. Poor decisions will ruin your chance to advance. Don't take risks or overdo it, and you'll not only thrive, but you will excel, professionally and financially. Use common sense. Channel your energy wisely, and doorways will open and opportunities will unfold. Your numbers are 5, 18, 21, 24, 30, 38, 45.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Emotions are likely to conflict with professional duties. An attitude adjustment will help you bypass someone who is giving you a hard time. A humble, gracious approach to dealing with others will make them look bad, not you. Be wise, not foolish. ★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): A change will lead to benefits that will help you establish your next move. A chance to get ahead and to use your skills in a way you can enjoy yourself more is within reach. Make suggestions and excel. ★★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Push your way up using charm and persuasive tactics, but make sure that you will be able to deliver what you promise. Getting what you want is one thing, but honoring your word will be what seals a deal. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Concentrate on what's important. Emotions will surface if you are too sensitive to com-

ments others make. It's OK to say no if you feel pressured. Reduce stress -- don't add to it. Stay in control, and you will eliminate negativity and unwanted interference. ★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Use your flair, and don't be afraid to allocate what you want to happen. If you are friendly but forceful, the people you deal with will help you. Generosity will play a role, so don't forget to offer incentives. Romance is encouraged. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Love, social activity and networking will pay off. You will entice people to see things your way and help you get what you want. Promote and present, and someone you attract will offer the boost you need to make the right connections. ★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You will attract attention. The objective is to make sure that it's favorable, not detrimental, to getting ahead. A sophisticated look, coupled with an intelligent approach to the things you want to do, will help you reach your goal. ★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Refuse to let emotions or indulgent behavior stand between you and what you need to accomplish. Discuss sensitive issues openly and honestly, and you'll eliminate tension as well as wasted time. Use your intelligence to get your way. ★★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Take time to put yourself together. A new look, image or attitude will give you a better perspective on life and what you want to pursue. Focus on your happiness, health and emotional well-being. Romance is featured. ★★★★★

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You'll end up confused if you let someone play with your emotions. Ask questions, get background information and leave nothing to chance when it comes to love, personal matters or your health. Keep your guard up and personal information a secret. ★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Follow through with your plans. Live up to your promises, and avoid making unnecessary changes or purchases that add to your stress. Focus on learning, raising your awareness and making self-improvements. Challenge yourself to get fit and to live a healthy lifestyle. ★★★★★

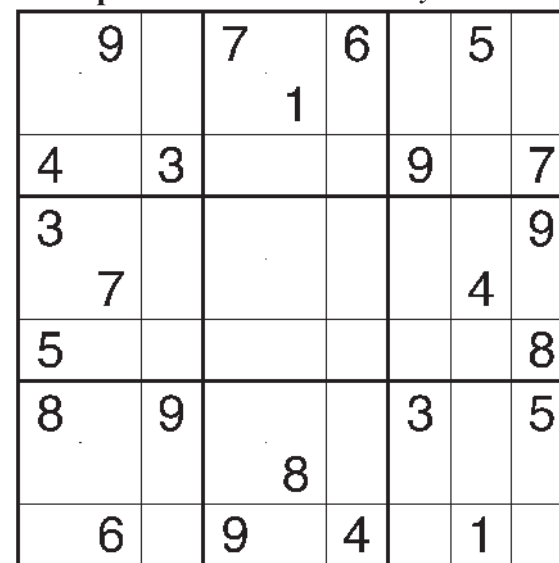
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Monitor what you do. Offering too much will end up being to someone else's benefit, not yours. Pick and choose where you allocate your time and effort. Make the most of your skills, knowledge and experience. ★★★
Birthday Baby: You are smart, curious, and fearless. You are helpful and persistent.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green



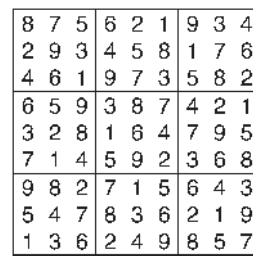
Difficulty Level ★★★

2/27

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer



Not Truly Level ★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID CUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

MOVING ON

Solution: 7 letters



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2/27

Accept, Attitude, Build, Care, Child, Closure, Contact, Emotion, Empower, Evolve, Experience, Feeling, Forgive, Freedom, Friend, Goal, Heart, Home, Idea, Inspire, Learn, Lesson, Life, Memory, Mentor, Moment, Outlook, Past, Personal, Progress, Protect, Relationship, School, Sell, Share, Space, Strong, Support, Talk, Time, Travel, Truth, Value
Yesterday's Answer: Teardrops

The NEW Treasury 39 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

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- (1) HR Specialist (Saipan)
- (1) Radio Operator/Weather Observer (Tinian)

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Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions shall be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin. Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.tenorio@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670)237-6500.

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CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

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Tokyo Olympics going ahead as planned

TOKYO (AP)—A spokesman for the Japanese government on Wednesday said the International Olympic Committee and local organizers are going as planned with the Tokyo Olympics despite the threat of the spreading coronavirus.

The comments from spokesman Yoshihide Suga follow the assertion by IOC veteran member Richard Pound that organizers face a three-month window to decide the fate of the games.

The Olympics are set to open on July 24 with 11,000 athletes. The Paralympics open Aug. 25 with 4,400.

Pound told the Associated Press that the fast-spreading virus could cancel the Olympics. Suga says Pound's opinion does not reflect the official view of the IOC, which has repeatedly said there are no plans to cancel or postpone the Tokyo Games.

The viral outbreak that began in China has infected more than 80,000 people and killed more than 2,700 globally. China has reported 2,715 deaths among 78,064 cases on the mainland. Five deaths in Japan have been attributed to the virus and the COVID-19 illness it causes.

"With regard to this member's comment, the IOC has responded that this is not their official position, and that the IOC is proceeding with preparations toward the games as scheduled," Suga said, speaking in Japanese at his daily news conference.



Two people wear masks as they visit the newly opened Japan Olympic Museum located near the New National Stadium, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020, in Tokyo.

AP

Pound is a former IOC vice-president and a member since 1978, and was the founding president of the World Anti-Doping Agency.

He also represented Canada as a swimmer at the Olympics.

In a telephone interview from Montreal, Pound said the IOC has a three-month window to decide, and suggested other options like moving events of postponing seemed less likely.

"In and around that time," he said, "I'd say folks are go-

ing to have to ask: 'Is this under sufficient control that we can be confident about going to Tokyo or now?'"

If the IOC decides the games cannot go forward as scheduled in Tokyo, "you're probably looking at a cancellation," said Pound, who repeated the IOC's stance that as of now the games are on.

The three-month window also goes for sponsors and television broadcasters who

need to firm up planning. Not to mention travelers, athletes and fans with 7.8 million tickets available for the Olympics and 2.3 million for the Paralympics.

As the games draw near, Pound said, "a lot of things have to start happening. You've got to start ramping up your security, your food, the Olympic Village, the hotels. The media folks will be in their building their studios."

The threat of the virus seems to be growing.

At a government task force meeting Wednesday on the virus outbreak, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said he was asking organizers to cancel or postpone major sports or cultural events over the next two weeks.

"The next one to two weeks is extremely important for the prevention of the escalation of the infection," Abe said. "We ask organizers to cancel, postpone or scale down the size of such events."

He did not name specific events but said he was speaking about nationwide events that attract large crowds.

Olympics Minister Seiko Hashimoto, speaking in parliament, said "we believe it is necessary to make a worst case scenario in order to improve our operation to achieve success." She added plans were being made "so that we can safely hold the Tokyo Olympics."

Also Wednesday, Japan's Kyodo news agency reported that that Colombian Olympic Committee has decided not to participate in pre-Olympic training camps in southern Japan.

IOC member casts doubt on postponing or moving Games

A senior member of the International Olympic Committee said Tuesday that if it proves too dangerous to hold the Olympics in Tokyo this summer because of the coronavirus outbreak, organizers are more likely to cancel it altogether than to postpone or move it.

Dick Pound, a former Canadian swimming champion who has been on the IOC since 1978, making him its longest-serving member, estimated there is a three-month window—perhaps a two-month one—to decide the fate of the Tokyo Olympics, meaning a decision could be put off until late May.

The modern Olympics, which date to 1896, have been canceled only during wartime. The Olympics in 1940 were supposed to be in Tokyo but were called off because of Japan's war with China and World War II. The Rio Games in Brazil went on as scheduled in 2016 despite the outbreak of the Zika virus.

Woods to follow familiar 'blueprint' for Masters title defense



GEORGIA—Tiger Woods said on Tuesday that he will prepare for this year's Masters in much the same way as in 2019 when he ended an 11-year wait for a major title with a remarkable triumph at Augusta National.

Woods completed an extraordinary return from spinal fusion surgery he underwent in 2017, producing one of the most emotional finishes in tournament history as he came from behind to win by one shot last April.

"The plan is to prepare the same way," Woods said on a Masters champion conference call. "It worked last year, so yeah, I've got a blueprint for what I need to do and hopefully I can have the same feelings."

Woods, who has competed in three official PGA Tour events this season, did not reveal his playing schedule ahead of the April 9-12 Masters but did say that he is doing everything he can to peak at the year's first major.

The former world No. 1 said he turned his focus to his Masters title defense last December, when his duties as a playing captain for the victorious U.S. squad in the Presidents Cup in Australia came to a close.

"Once that was done, my prep has been just like it usually is—(that) is 'what do I need to do to get ready for the Masters?'" said the five-times Masters champion. "I've been fortunate to have done this now five times, and to try and have everything peak together for just an incredible week, it's hard to do."

Woods said his latest triumph was all the more special because his two children were there to witness the moment after being on hand for his close call at the previous year's British Open.

After sealing his triumph, Woods enjoyed an emotional embrace with the youngsters, who later had their own battle for his coveted victor's Green Jacket.

"To have them experience

what it feels like to be part of a major championship and watch their dad fail and not get it done, and now to be a part of it when I did get it done, I think it's two memories that they will never forget," said Woods.

"Just watching them fight over the Green Jacket on the airplane was pretty funny. 'I want to wear it! No, I want to wear it!'—and that's something I certainly will never forget," he added.

Meanwhile, they know who Keith Mitchell is now at PGA National. That's progress.

It was much different a year ago at the Honda Classic. On a leaderboard where Brooks Koepka and Rickie Fowler were closest to Mitchell, and where past major champions like Vijay Singh, Sergio Garcia, Jim Furyk and Lucas Glover were hovering not far from the top, it was the relative unknown who emerged as the winner.

The Honda was Mitchell's first career win, a breakthrough moment for the now-

28-year-old from Chattanooga, Tennessee, and he's back at PGA National this week—now, with people shouting his name as he walks by—with hopes of defending the title.

"The crazy part is, you know, a couple of years ago I didn't have a PGA Tour card and now I'm playing in the Masters against the best players in the world," Mitchell said. "I mean, yes, it's what your dream, what your goal is, but it means you just have to work that much harder and do that much more."

He has kept a sense of perspective, and a sense of humor.

As he walked up the 18th fairway in the final round a year ago, at that moment tied for the lead with Koepka at 8 under, the NBC broadcast referred to him as "Kevin" Mitchell. The Palm Beach Post, the newspaper based closest to PGA National, ran "No-Name Champion" as its banner headline the day after the Honda. Mitchell had the good sense to understand that the paper meant no disrespect.

Besides, he pointed out, the \$1,224,000 winner's check—which he clinched with a birdie at the par-5 finishing hole, a putt that left him one shot clear of Koepka and Fowler—was made out to the right name.

"The motivation is simply the excitement, adrenaline, the hard work and effort that you've put in your entire life," Mitchell said. "I started playing golf as a hobby. I started playing it because my best friend at the time, his dad was the head pro at the local golf course and that's how I started playing golf. Just simply out of enjoyment and love for the game. I just kept playing and enjoying it. I played in college and then I turned pro because I thought I might have a chance to be good enough."

Koepka, the world's No. 3 player and reigning PGA Championship winner, is back in the field this week. So are two of the three other current major-title holders, U.S. Open winner Gary Woodland and British Open champion Shane Lowry.

LeBron's 40 bests Zion, Lakers top Pelicans



LOS ANGELES (AP)—LeBron James had 40 points and eight rebounds in his first career meeting with Zion Williamson while leading the Los Angeles Lakers to their sixth straight victory, 118-109 over the New Orleans Pelicans on Tuesday night.

Anthony Davis had 21 points and 14 rebounds to remain unbeaten in his three meetings with his former team this season.

In the Lakers' first game after an emotional memorial service for Kobe Bryant at Staples Center on Monday, James opened up a close contest with back-to-back buckets at the rim with about three minutes left. Danny Green sealed it for Los Angeles with his fifth 3-pointer with 51 seconds to play.

Williamson had 29 points and six rebounds in his first

career showdown with James and Davis, his predecessor as the Pelicans' centerpiece. In his 13th NBA game, Williamson scored at least 20 points for the ninth consecutive time, but managed only one field goal in the fourth quarter.

Brandon Ingram had 34 points against his former team, but just six in the final period as New Orleans lost for only the second time in seven games.

Williamson was still injured for the Pelicans' first two meetings of the season with the Lakers, but the No. 1 overall pick's delayed debut in Hollywood was as entertaining as everyone hoped. Williamson had several impressive dunks in his usual fearsome floor game, and only six missed free throws kept him from surpassing his career high of 32 points.

Davis is the leading scorer and rebounder in New Orleans franchise history, making six All-Star teams during his ten-



Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James (23) dunks over New Orleans Pelicans' Josh Hart (3) during the first half of an NBA game Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2020, in Los Angeles.

half, and White had a career-high 35 in his third consecutive game over 30 points.

Chicago lost for the ninth time in 10 games.

Pacers 119, Hornets 80

In Indianapolis, Domantas Sabonis had 21 points, 15 rebounds and nine assists to lead Indiana over Charlotte.

T.J. Warren scored 15 of his 19 points in the first half and Justin Holiday had 16 points for the short-handed Pacers (34-24), who bounced back from a blowout in Toronto for a third win in four games.

Miles Bridges scored 17 points and Caleb Martin had 11 for the Hornets (19-38), who have lost two in a row after a stretch of three straight wins -- all on the road.

Nuggets 115, Pistons 98

In Denver, Jerami Grant scored a career-high 29 points and Nikola Jokic had a season-best four steals to help healthy Nuggets beat Detroit.

At 40-18, the Nuggets are tied for their best start through 58 games in their NBA franchise history. They had the same mark a season ago on their way to winding up with the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference.

Jokic added 16 points in a game where Denver led by as many as 15 points in the third quarter, had it cut to single digits and pulled away in the fourth to remain the second seed in the West.

Derrick Rose and Christian Wood each had 20 points for Detroit. Rose has now scored 20 or more points a team-high 25 times this season.

Celtics 118, Trail Blazers 106

In Portland, Jayson Tatum had 36 points, including a career-high eight 3-pointers, and the Boston Celtics beat the Trail Blazers.

Jaylen Brown added 24 points for the Celtics, who sit in third in the Eastern Conference behind the first-place Milwaukee Bucks and the Toronto Raptors.

Tatum had 26 points in the second half alone as the Celtics built a 19-point lead in the fourth quarter. The Blazers, playing without All-Star Damian Lillard, couldn't keep up. All of Tatum's points came from the floor, as he did not go to the line once in the game.

Warriors hopeful for Curry's return

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Stephen Curry is aiming to return to the Golden State Warriors lineup on Sunday for the first time since breaking his left hand in October.

Coach Steve Kerr said Tuesday that the hope is that Curry will be able to play against Washington. Curry has been practicing in recent weeks and will be re-evaluated on Saturday before a final decision is made.

"He's had that date in his mind," Kerr said. "He'll continue to work this week and we'll make that determination on Saturday."

Curry hasn't played since breaking his left hand on Oct. 30 against the Phoenix Suns. The Warriors (12-45) have the worst record in the NBA this season after making five straight trips to the NBA Finals.

Curry has played only four games and Klay Thompson has missed the entire season recovering from a serious knee injury.

Kerr said he wants Curry to get time to play with recently acquired forward Andrew Wiggins down the stretch to help make for a smoother transition next season.

Meanwhile, Philadelphia 76ers guard Ben Simmons will miss at least two more weeks with nerve issues in his lower back.

The All-Star played just a few minutes in Saturday's loss to Milwaukee before leaving with the back injury. He will undergo daily treatment for his nerve impingement and be evaluated in two weeks.

The Sixers are 36-22 as they head down the stretch without one of their best players. They are 27-2 but just 9-20 at home—and leave this week for a four-game West Coast trip that starts Sunday.

The 23-year-old Simmons averaged 16.7 points, 7.8 rebounds and 8.2 assists in 54 games.

Shake Milton started at point guard for Simmons in Monday's victory over Atlanta. Shooting guard Josh Richardson also played the point and both players will be needed again when the Sixers play Wednesday at Cleveland.

In other news, Memphis rookie forward Brandon Clarke hurt his right quadriceps and will be re-evaluated in two weeks.

The Grizzlies updated Clarke's status Tuesday night.

Clarke left Monday night's 124-97 loss to the Los Angeles Clippers after playing only three minutes with what was called hip soreness. The Grizzlies said further tests showed an injury to Clarke's right quadriceps.

The Grizzlies already are without Jaren Jackson Jr. after he sprained his left knee in Friday night's loss to the Lakers and will be re-evaluated within two weeks.

The 6-foot-8 Clarke has appeared in 50 games and is averaging 12 points and 21.7 minutes played. He was the MVP of the 2019 Summer League and the championship game MVP as Memphis won its first Las Vegas summer league title.

ure. He went just 6 for 21 from the field in this meeting, failing to score 40 points against the Pelicans for the first time.

Lonzo Ball had 10 points, eight assists and eight rebounds, and Josh Hart scored three points in their second return to face the Lakers, who traded them to New Orleans along with Ingram last July for Davis.

The Pelicans also got three first-round draft picks in their princely haul for Davis, who had requested a trade. Davis has been just as good as the Lakers hoped in propelling them back to NBA championship contention, while the Pelicans are getting an All-Star season from Ingram alongside Williamson in an increasingly potent core.

James scored 11 points in less than two minutes early in the third quarter to stretch the Lakers' lead to 14 points, but Ingram scored 10 in the period to keep it close.

Alex Caruso provided the Lakers with his usual injection of energy in the fourth quarter, particularly with a stunning

block of Ball's shot at the rim that left Ball flat on his back. Caruso finished with eight points and eight assists.

Bucks 108, Raptors 97

In Toronto, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 19 points and 19 rebounds, Khris Middleton scored 22 points and the Milwaukee Bucks beat the Raptors in a matchup between the top teams in the Eastern Conference.

Eric Bledsoe scored 17 points and Brook Lopez had 15 as the NBA-leading Bucks won their fourth straight and 18th of 20. Milwaukee (50-8) was playing the second game of a back-to-back after winning in overtime at Washington Monday.

Behind by 12 points late in the second quarter, the Bucks rallied to beat the Raptors in their first game in Toronto since losing Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals last May, completing a disappointing collapse after winning the first two games of that series at home.

Pascal Siakam scored 22

points and Fred VanVleet had 14 as the defending NBA champion Raptors lost for the second time in 19 games. Toronto was beaten at home for the first time since Jan. 12 against San Antonio, ending a nine-game run.

Thunder 124, Bulls 122

In Chicago, Dennis Schroder scored 21 points and made a huge defensive play in the fourth quarter, helping Oklahoma City top the Bulls for its fourth consecutive win.

Oklahoma City blew a 24-point lead but recovered in time to earn its ninth straight victory on the road, breaking a Thunder record. Danilo Gallinari scored 24 points, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander had 21 points and 11 rebounds, and Chris Paul finished with 19 points and nine assists.

The Bulls wasted a pair of stellar performances from Zach LaVine and rookie reserve Coby White. LaVine scored 27 of his 41 points in the second

Severino needs Tommy John surgery, out for year



DUNEDIN, Fla. (AP)—

Luis Severino will miss the season with an elbow injury that requires Tommy John surgery, and the New York Yankees' rotation no longer looks all that imposing.

New York announced Tuesday that the 26-year-old right-hander has a partially torn ulnar collateral ligament, a development that means the two-time All-Star will miss all of 2020 after being sidelined for nearly all of 2019.

Mets medical director Dr. David Altchek will operate Thursday in New York.

"I am extremely disappointed that I will not be able to put on a Yankees uniform and compete with my teammates this year," Severino said in a statement posted on Twitter. "but I promise that I will be working tirelessly during this process to come back stronger than ever."

Left-hander James Paxton already was projected to miss the first two months of the season following back surgery on Feb. 5. Domingo German must serve the final 63 games of an 81-game suspension for violating Major League Baseball's domestic violence policy. He is eligible to return June 5, barring any postponements.

Severino's injury leaves the AL East favorites with a rota-



New York Yankees' Luis Severino delivers a pitch in the bullpen during a spring training baseball workout Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, in Tampa, Fla.

its best in a decade, and lost to Houston in the AL Championship Series.

Severino went 19-8 with a 3.39 ERA in 2018 and was given a \$40 million, four-year contract. He was scratched from his first scheduled spring training appearance on March 5 because of rotator cuff inflammation in his right shoulder. The Yankees said April 9 he had strained his latissimus dorsi muscle. He did not make a minor league injury rehabilitation appearance until Sept. 1 and did not make his first appearance for the Yankees until Sept. 17.

Severino was 1-1 with a 1.50 ERA over 12 innings in three regular-season starts for New York, then was 0-1 with a 2.16 ERA over 8 1/3 innings in a pair of postseason outings.

Boone said Severino first felt the soreness in the days after his Game 3 start in the ALCS.

Severino had an MRI in New York in early December and was cleared to start his throwing program. He experienced discomfort while throwing his changeup on flat ground during January in the Dominican Republic. Severino returned to New York, and another MRI and CT scan were negative.

"My gut is it's something that dates back to when he started feeling something," Cashman said. "In terms of the declaration of the injury, with the physical testing upon the MRIs and where his complaints were, it didn't reveal itself. But now as of yesterday for the first time, the physical testing points to the area on the MRI arthrogram that shows a problem. The prior MRIs had no problem and the point of injury was not around the ligament."

Meanwhile, Aaron Judge could be ready to play in his first spring training game next week after being limited by right shoulder soreness.

"I would say no playing for sure this week," Boone said.

Judge has increased his throwing to 120 feet and is hitting off a tee and taking soft toss in an indoor cage. Judge first experienced the shoulder soreness during early workouts at the Yankees minor complex and was shut down from hitting a week spring training started.

Gleyber Torres agreed to a one-year contract that pays \$675,600 while in the major leagues and \$302,500 in the unlikely event he is sent to the minors.

Martin heals from playoff injury, Braves boast deep bullpen

NORTH PORT, Fla. (AP)—It's still painful for reliever Chris Martin to talk about what happened in the playoffs.

Game 1 of the NL Division Series last year. The 6-foot-7 reliever entered in the eighth inning against St. Louis with the Braves leading 3-1.

After throwing his warmup pitches, Martin was finished.

"I wanted to stay away from that question," he said. "Real tough. One of the hardest things I've ever gone through."

Acquired from Texas in late July to help in those exact situations, Martin never threw a pitch in October. He suffered an oblique injury, underwent an MRI and was lost for the series.

The Braves wound up losing the playoff opener 7-6 and eventually dropped the series in a decisive Game 5.

"That hurt a lot," Braves manager Brian Snitker said of Martin's loss. "We win that first game and it's a totally different series. That was a huge loss. At that time of year, you can't afford to lose a guy like that."

To shore up their bullpen, the Braves signed Will Smith to a three-year, \$39 million deal. They also committed

\$40 million to Smith, Martin, Mark Melancon and Shane Greene. Snitker agrees with anybody who thinks Atlanta has the best relief corps in baseball.

"It was an easy decision for me," Smith said. "We've got some really good arms down here. A really good team, young team. A lot of promise."

Martin went into the post-season not having given up a run in September. But it took him little time to realize his October appearance didn't feel right.

"I got out there and I felt something go," the right-hander said. "Fluke thing. I found out it was worse than I thought it was."

What Martin watched made him feel worse in the playoffs.

Luke Wilson, who replaced Martin, gave up a home run to the first batter he faced, Paul Goldschmidt.

Martin's absence continued to hurt Atlanta, which blew an eighth-inning lead in a 5-4 loss in Game 4.

"I feel I let people down and put people in tough situations," Martin said.

Many feel Smith will end up being the team's closer, others feel he'll fit in somewhere else in key situations.

He said it doesn't matter to him.

"If the bullpen takes the mentality to close their inning, we'll be successful whether it's the seventh, eighth or ninth when we get our three outs," Smith said.

In Smith, Mark Melancon, Greene, Luke Jackson, Darren O'Day and A.J. Minter, the Braves have six guys with a combined 469 saves in their careers. Jackson had racked up 18 saves with the Braves before Melancon took over closing duties.

"It creates versatility," said the side-arming O'Day, part of strong relief staffs with the Angels in 2008 and Orioles in 2014. "It's up there, it's pretty deep. There's a variety of styles so we should be able to shorten some games."

A new rule this year calls for relievers to face three batters per outing. While not a big fan of the rule—"I don't know I support Major League Baseball to tell managers how to strategize the game and how to manage bullpens"—O'Day said the Braves have a lot of options.

"If I was managing how to do it myself, I'd do it based on matchups," O'Day said. "Sometimes being a closer is

easier than setup man. Sometimes you save the best hitters for the setup man and the closer gets numbers 7, 8, 9."

Melancon said all those arms with closing experiences creates flexibility as well as confidences that's beneficial.

"On paper, we haven't done anything," he said. "But it's pretty good. We have to improve on our prior years."

After the Braves began spring training play with 18 straight singles, Ozzie Albies broke the extra-base drought with a first-inning double Tuesday against Minnesota. Braves starter Mike Foltynewicz worked two innings, walking none and striking out three. But the hit he gave up was a towering home run to designated hitter Trevor Larnach.

Atlanta first baseman Freddie Freeman wasn't in the Braves' starting lineup Tuesday because of irritation in his right elbow.

Freeman felt discomfort Monday and again Tuesday.

Freeman had arthroscopic surgery on his right elbow on Oct. 18. The entire right elbow joint was cleaned during the procedure, which included removing three fragmented loose bodies and cleaning up multiple bone spur formations.

tion of newly signed ace Gerrit Cole, Masahiro Tanaka, J.A. Happ and two openings. The usual recovery time for Tommy John surgery is a year or more.

"I don't want to sugarcoat the fact that being without Sevy, that's a blow, but it doesn't change our expectations and what we're truly capable of," manager Aaron Boone said. "So, no, nothing changes."

Lefty Jordan Montgomery, who came back in September from Tommy John surgery, has been throwing at up to 94 mph and is the leading candidate for one slot. Jonathan Loaisiga and rookies Deivi Garcia and Michael King are possibilities along with Luis Cessa.

"We're always constantly looking for upgrades anyway," general manager Brian Cashman said. "But this time of year you always look from within and see and give opportunities for what you have and typically that's how it shakes out, especially until after the June draft regardless, so you keep relying on depth. So wouldn't say expect any domino effect or cause and effect in terms of us being able to go to marketplace where a marketplace this time of year typically doesn't exist."

New York won the AL East with a 103-59 record last year,

Teams want video review for pass interference scrap



The NFL's video review system for pass interference calls could be scrapped after one season.

An offseason survey by the powerful competition committee, which recommends rules adjustments, shows strong opposition to the system installed last year.

The biggest complaint is that subjectivity has been added to the equation, which many owners believe has handcuffed officials. Several owners, as well as coaches, general managers and, of course, players, complained about inconsistencies in the calls. Rarely were calls on the field overturned when challenged.

The league extended video review to pass interference after the Los Angeles Rams

benefited from a non-call in the NFC title game against the New Orleans Saints following the 2018 season.

The survey shows that bringing back for 2020 the video reviews on such calls (and non-calls) is opposed by 17 of 22 teams that responded to the survey. As for making the rule permanent, 21 are against and eight in favor.

The committee will have more meetings before presenting its recommendations to the full ownership in late March in Palm Beach, Florida. Three-quarters of the owners, 24 out of 32, are required to pass any rules.

Meanwhile, the NFL moved closer to labor peace for another decade early Wednesday when player representatives voted to send a new deal already approved by the owners that includes a 17-game season to the full union

membership.

A simple majority of some 2,000 players must accept the agreement for it to go into effect this year.

After nearly four hours of meetings between player reps and members of the NFL's negotiating committee Tuesday in Indianapolis, the 32 team reps spent several more hours discussing the deal. They then gave the nod for all NFL Players Association members to make the final decision.

George Atallah, assistant executive director of external affairs at the NFLPA, announced the move on his verified Twitter account after 1 a.m. Wednesday.

There was no immediate word when that vote would occur.

The new CBA calls for a 17-game regular season, which is expected to begin in 2021; more roster spots; a shortened

preseason; a higher percentage of revenues for players; and upgraded pensions for former players. The owners approved it last Thursday, though not unanimously.

It seems certain the players will accept the deal, or else their leadership would not likely have made this move.

The NFL Players Association's executive committee voted 6-5 against the contract on Friday. The 32 player reps postponed any action while seeking a meeting with the league, which occurred in Indianapolis on Tuesday.

The current collective bargaining agreement expires in March 2021, but the owners are eager to get a new contract in place as soon as possible. That would enable them to begin looking toward new, lu-

crative broadcast deals, with a decade of labor peace assured.

But the players didn't appear to be in a rush to approve the new agreement that is the result of 10 months of negotiations between the sides. Indeed, several player reps last Friday night were adamant that more negotiating is needed.

The diciest topic has been a 17-game schedule. Players have been firm and loud in opposition for years—dating to before the 2011 lockout that ended with an agreement to the current labor deal. Mainly, the players have been citing safety reasons for not extending the regular season.

Owners have offered, among other things, two more roster spots, which some players believe isn't enough, and

a reduction of the preseason from four games to three.

Players also would have significantly fewer requirements in the offseason and in training camp.

This agreement, which would run through the 2030 season, also includes a boost in payment of overall revenues to the players. The amounts would depend on whether the season is 16 or 17 games.

Expansion of the playoffs by one team in each conference is not a bargaining issue, but the owners would prefer player approval of a new CBA before instituting it. Still, that could occur for the upcoming season; the NFL has discussed a 14-team postseason field for years, and Commissioner Roger Goodell as far back as 2014 spoke of it happening.

BETTER

From Page 28

I could say that I've never seen as much enthusiasm into our program as I've witnessed

this season. This will bolster our program and I am confident we will have a better performance in the North Pacific Regional Championships and in the POJC this

season," Race said.

CNMI's junior players will compete in two more local events before participating in off-island tournaments mid this year.

KHS

From Page 28

ing just a 7-point lead, 23-16. The Ayuyus then pulled away with Calvin Babauta heating up, scoring 8 of his 10 points in the last half, including two triples. Deeus Salas added one triple, while Jay Art Palmes, Dillan Cruz, and Christian Santos contributed one field goal apiece.

Mt. Carmel 2, after staying afloat in the first half, folded up in the second, as only Walter Sablan and Ohane Borja scored for the winless squad.

Meanwhile, KHS 3 notched twin victories to boost its playoff chances in the competition.

After dropping its first seven matches, KHS 3 got into the win column following a 29-23 triumph over MCS 2 in the curtain-raiser on the north court. The Ayuyus then made it back-to-back after nosing out Da'Ok Academy in the last game, 20-19. KHS moved up to ninth place in the team standings to remain in contention for a spot in the playoffs, where only the Top



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Kagman High School Varsity's Miguel Fitipol, left, pulls up for a long jumper against Marianas High School Junior Varsity's John Rizo during their game in the 2019-2020 Public School System Inter-scholastic Boys High School Basketball League last Tuesday at the MHS Gymnasium.

STANDINGS

TEAMS	W	L
KHS JV	8	0
MCS Varsity	8	0
SSHS	6	1
Agape	5	2
SIS	5	2
MHS Varsity	3	4
KHS Varsity	3	4
MHS 3	3	5
KHS 3	2	7
MHS JV	1	7
Da'Ok	0	6
MCS 2	0	6

10 teams after the eliminations will advance.

In other results, MHS 3 and MHS JV prevailed over their respective opponents on the south court.

MHS JV snapped its seven-game losing skid after nipping KHS Varsity, 22-21, while MHS 3 booked win No. 3 in eight games following a 29-21 victory against Da'Ok.

Da'Ok fell to a 0-6 slate to

join MCS 2 at the bottom 2 of the team standings and must start collecting wins to keep their playoff hopes alive.

The league is in the final stretch of the regular season with three playing days left in the elimination, including today's games. The playoffs will take pace on March 13 and 14 with Rota and Tinian teams joining the Top 10 finishers in the regular season.

MP

From Page 28

MPU with his first coming in the 13th minute and giving MP United the upper hand. Five minutes later, Matansa's Nolan Ngewakl knotted the count and the game remained in a stand-off at the end of the first half.

In the second half, Song again delivered with his shot in the 37th minute, while Sosa gave MP United more cushion after finding the back of the net in the 48th minute. Ngewakl then threatened MP United with his conversion in 56th minute, but the eventual winning team got the goal back quickly, courtesy of Linden in the 59th, to seal the deal.

Meanwhile, TanHoldings pulled away from the winless Kanoa Resort in the second half en route to getting win No. 2 and the early lead in the division.

Kaithlyn Chavez led the rout with her hat trick, two of them were recorded in the second half breakaway. Mark Costales and Jared Villagomez contributed two goals apiece,

while Matty Angeles and Monico Claridades chipped in one each.

BOYS U16 DIVISION Kanoa 5, MP United 1

Kanoa also earned its second victory in as many matches in the boys U16 division after easing past MP United last weekend.

Five different players scored for Kanoa with Markus Toves getting the ball rolling for the team with his shot in the 18th minute. Andrew Sablan, Brian Lubao, Merrick Toves, and Jaydee Jose hit the board in the 24th, 45th, 52nd, and 70th minute, respectively, while

TanHoldings 5, Matansa 3

TanHoldings matched Kanoa's record after outclassing Matansa in the other game in the division.

Mark Joseph Roque handed TanHoldings twin goals, while Ariel Narvaez, Oliver Fajardo, and Kohtaro Goto made one apiece. Gabriel Arkoh, Rakid Hassan, and Alex Megino scored the three goals for Matansa, which absorbed its second loss in as many matches to join MP United at the bottom of the team standings.

2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League

TEAM STANDINGS (As of Feb. 22, 2020)

CO-ED U13 DIVISION

CLUB	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
TanHoldings	2	0	0	11	1	10	6
Shirley's	1	0	0	4	3	1	3
MP United	1	0	1	5	4	1	0
Matansa	0	0	2	2	4	-2	0
Kanoa	0	0	2	3	13	-10	0

BOYS U16 DIVISION

CLUB	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
Kanoa	2	0	0	8	3	5	6
TanHoldings	2	0	0	8	4	4	6
Matansa	0	0	2	5	8	-3	0
MP United	0	0	2	2	8	-6	0



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

TanHoldings Football Club goalie Terell Hix, left, picks up the ball, while his teammate and a Kanoa Football Club player run after the leather during the first half of their co-ed U13 division game in the 2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.



Tokyo
Olympics
going ahead
as planned

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Saipan Tribune Sports

LeBron's 40
bests Zion,
Lakers top
Pelicans

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

A Kagman High School 3 player drives against two Da'Ok Academy defenders during the second half of their game in the 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball League last Tuesday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

KHS JV, MCS still unbeaten

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Kagman High School Junior Varsity and Mt. Carmel School Varsity are still on a roll in the 2019-2020 Public School System Interscholastic Boys High School Basketball League after posting contrasting victories last Tuesday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



The Knights worked their way through a 26-19 win over Marianas High School Varsity on the north court, while the Ayuyus coasted past Mt. Carmel 2 in their game on the south end, 40-20. KHS JV and MCS Varsity now hold similar 8-0 records to remain tied for the lead in the elimination round of the 12-team league.

Steve King, Merrick Toves, and Matthew Richardson combined for 20 points for MCS Varsity to keep their team's undefeated record. Four other Knights standouts contributed

to the team's cause to foil MHS Varsity's upset bid.

Oldie Roligat paced MHS Varsity with his 10 points.

In the KHS JV-MCS 2 tiff, the Ayuyus notched a double-

digit winning margin after going all out in the second half.

The final 12 minutes of play started with Kagman hold-

See KHS on Page 27

Better showing from junior players

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Long-time CNMI coach Jeff Race sees the islands' junior players bouncing back this season after a challenging year in the Pacific Oceania Junior Championships in 2019.

"It was a great year for our senior team, but not for our junior squad. We have been getting the No. 1 and 2 positions in the Pacific in the last five or six years, but last year we were No. 5," said Race, who was honored along with the rest of the members and officials of the CNMI National Senior Tennis Team last week at the Northern Marianas Sports Association Annual Banquet as they swept the major awards in the event.

In the POJC, the CNMI missed getting even a single title in the competition—a first in the last six years of dominating the regional tournament and after winning the coveted

Nations Cup for two straight seasons (2017 and 2018). Last year, the Commonwealth settled for two runner-up honors, courtesy



of Jimin Woo's second place finish in the boys U16 singles event and his and Sean Lee's No. 2 performance in the doubles contest of the

same age group.

"After the challenging 2019, we added some serious changes in our program," the CNMI Sports Hall of Famer said.

Race was talking about the training and actual games the junior players are underdoing. He explained that in their previous training regimen, players at this time of the year would have gone through 100 sets in practice and competitions. When changes were made, Race said junior players have played 1,200 sets.

"At first I don't know how the players and even their parents would react to it. However, everyone buy into it and

See BETTER on Page 27



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Helen Kim returns to Serin Chung during their girls U14 singles title match in the 2020 White Coconut Tennis Classic held this month at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

MP United Football Club's William Sosa, right, takes a shot in front of Matansa Football Club's James Loveras during their co-ed U13 division game in the 2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

MP United, TanHoldings prevail

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

TanHoldings Football Club took the early lead, while MP United battled back from a season opening loss as action in the co-ed U13 division of the 2020 NMIFA Spring Youth League continued last Saturday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

TanHoldings cruised past Kanoa Football Club, 9-0, to gain its second victory in

as many games and moved on top of the team standings. MP United, on the other hand, downed Matansa, 4-2, to recover from the opening loss as action in the opening week of the league.

Ian Song drilled a pair of goals, while William Sosa and Miles Linden added one apiece to put MP United on the win column. Song hit back-to-back goals for

See MP on Page 27

